WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

JUST PEACE COMPANION

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"Guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79)

SECOND EDITION

World Council of Churches Publications

JUST PEACE COMPANION
Second Edition

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Preface

The documentation presented here is meant to be used alongside the *Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*. The drafters hope that this further documentation will aid individuals and groups in studying and reflecting on the *Ecumenical Call* itself, and for that reason the *Call* itself is reproduced immediately after this Preface.

The documentation largely follows the structure of the *Call* and intends to provide necessary background information as well as basic biblical, theological and ethical considerations to support and unfold its basic message.

The documentation has been compiled by the same drafting group that prepared the text of the declaration. No individual authors are indicated for the different parts of the documentation, since most of these are the result of collective work. Much of the original research and theological reflection was undertaken by the first drafting group that prepared the Initial Statement towards an Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace, which was circulated widely in 2009. The theological rationale developed in the Initial Statement had in principle been received positively among member churches and ecumenical partner groups.

It was subsequently decided that the declaration should be a relatively concise text and that the analysis and argument behind the declaration should be developed more fully in a "companion document." The initial statement then became the basis for the preparation of this documentation. Where necessary, the material from the initial statement has been revised or rewritten in the light of critical comments received, but the essential thrust of the argument has been retained, honouring both

the excellent work done by the first drafting group as well as the many comments which had urged that the statement be retained.

Further material has been added to this opening part of the documentation, that is, the first two chapters and some parts of the fourth chapter. The third chapter places the process of preparing the Ecumenical Call to Just Peace into its specific historical and institutional context, the "Decade to Overcome Violence." The declaration and this supporting documentation are being published to mark the official end of the decade and to provide a strong impulse for the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, which will take place in Kingston, Jamaica, in May 2011 under the theme "Glory to God and Peace on Earth."

The final chapter of the documentation focuses on "Just Peace Practices." It is built around first-hand knowledge available and accessible to the drafting group. Information provided by churches in response to the initial statement has been used as well. It is the hope of the drafting group that this concluding chapter will be expanded and amplified by examples of "good practice" collected during the IEPC, especially during the workshops.

On behalf of the drafting group,
Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser

An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace

"Guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79)

Preamble: This call is a concerted Christian voice addressed primarily to the worldwide Christian community. Inspired by the example of Jesus of Nazareth, it invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace. Aware that the promise of peace is a core value of all religions, it reaches out to all who seek peace according to their own religious traditions and commitments. The call is received by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and commended for study, reflection, collaboration and common action. It is issued in response to a WCC Assembly recommendation in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2006, and builds on insights gained in the course of the ecumenical "Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001-2010: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace."

Just Peace embodies a fundamental shift in ethical practice. It implies a different framework of analysis and criteria for action. This call signals the shift and indicates some of the implications for the life and witness of the churches. A resource document, the Just Peace Companion*, presents more developed biblical, theological and ethical considerations, proposals for further exploration and examples of good practice. It is hoped that these materials, together with the commitments arising from the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Kingston, Jamaica, in May 2011, under the theme "Glory to God and Peace on Earth," will assist the forthcoming Assembly of the WCC to reach a new ecumenical consensus on justice and peace.*

1 **Justice embracing peace:** Without peace, can there be justice? Without justice, can there be peace? Too often, we pursue justice at the expense of peace, and peace at the expense of justice. To conceive peace apart from justice is to compromise the hope that "justice and peace shall embrace" (Ps. 85:10). When justice and peace are lacking, or set in opposition, we need to reform our ways. Let us rise, therefore, and work together for peace and justice.

2 **Let the peoples speak:** There are many stories to tell—stories soaked with violence, the violation of human dignity and the destruction of creation. If all ears would hear the cries, no place would be truly silent. Many continue to reel from the impact of wars; ethnic and religious animosity, discrimination based on race and caste mar the façade of nations and leave ugly scars. Thousands are dead, displaced, homeless, refugees within their own homeland. Women and children often bear the brunt of conflicts: many women are abused, trafficked, killed; children are separated from their parents, orphaned, recruited as soldiers, abused. Citizens in some countries face violence by occupation, paramilitaries, guerrillas, criminal cartels or government forces. Citizens of many nations suffer governments obsessed with national security and armed might; yet these fail to bring real security, year after year. Thousands of children die each day from inadequate nutrition while those in power continue to make economic and political decisions that favor a relative few.

3 **Let the Scriptures speak:** The Bible makes justice the inseparable companion of peace (Is. 32:17; James 3:18). Both point to right and sustainable relationships in human society, the vitality of our connections with the earth, the "well-being" and integrity of creation. Peace is God's gift to a broken but beloved world, today as in the lifetime of Jesus Christ: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you." (John 14:27). Through the life and teachings, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we perceive peace as both promise and present—a hope for the future and a gift here and now.

4 Jesus told us to love our enemies, pray for our persecutors, and not to use deadly weapons. His peace is expressed by the spirit of the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-11). Despite persecution, he remains steadfast in his active nonviolence, even to death. His life of commitment to justice ends on a cross, an instrument of torture and execution. With the resurrection of Jesus, God confirms that such steadfast love, such obedience, such trust, leads to life. This is true also for us.

5 Wherever there is forgiveness, respect for human dignity, generosity, and care for the weak in the common life of humanity, we catch a glimpse—no matter how dim—of the gift of peace. It follows therefore that peace is lost when injustice, poverty and disease—as well as armed conflict, violence, and war—inflict wounds on the bodies and souls of human beings, on society and on the earth.

6 Yet some texts in the scriptures associate violence with the will of God. On the basis of these texts, sections of our Christian family have legitimized and continue to legitimize the use of violence by themselves and others. We can no longer read such texts without calling attention to the human failure to answer the divine call to peace. Today, we must interrogate texts that speak of violence, hate and prejudice, or call for the wrath of God to annihilate another people. We must allow such texts to teach us to discern when, like the people in the Bible, our purposes, our schemes, our animosities, passions and habits reflect our desires rather than the will of God.

7 **Let the church speak:** As the Body of Christ, the church is called to be a place of peacemaking. In manifold ways, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, our liturgical traditions illustrate how God's peace calls us to share peace with each other and with the world. Yet, more often than not, churches fail to live out their call. Christian disunity, which in many ways undermines the churches' credibility in terms of peacemaking, invites us to a continuous conversion of hearts and minds. Only when grounded in God's peace can communities of faith be "agents of reconciliation and peace with justice in homes, churches and societies as well as in political, social and economic structures at the global level" (WCC Assembly, 1998). The church that lives the peace it proclaims is what Jesus called a city set on a hill for all to see (Matt. 5:14). Believers exercising the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to them by God in Christ point beyond the churches to what God is doing in the world (see 2 Cor. 5:18).

THE WAY OF JUST PEACE

8 There are many ways of responding to violence; many ways of practicing peace. As members of the community that proclaims Christ the embodiment of peace, we respond to the call to bring the divine gift of peace into contemporary contexts of violence and conflict. So we join the Way of Just Peace, which requires both movement towards the goal and commitment to the journey. We invite people of all worldviews and

religious traditions to consider the goal and to share of their journeys. Just Peace invites all of us to testify with our lives. To pursue peace we must prevent and eliminate personal, structural and media violence, including violence against people because of race, caste, gender, sexual orientation, culture or religion. We must be responsible to those who have gone before us, living in ways that honor the wisdom of our ancestors and the witness of the saints in Christ. We also have a responsibility to those who are the future: our children, "tomorrow people." Our children deserve to inherit a more just and peaceful world.

9 Nonviolent resistance is central to the Way of Just Peace. Well-organized and peaceful resistance is active, tenacious and effective – whether in the face of governmental oppression and abuse or business practices which exploit vulnerable communities and creation. Recognizing that the strength of the powerful depends on the obedience and compliance of citizens, of soldiers and, increasingly, of consumers, nonviolent strategies may include acts of civil disobedience and non-compliance.

10 On the Way of Just Peace the justifications of armed conflict and war become increasingly implausible and unacceptable. The churches have struggled with their disagreement on this matter for decades; however, the Way of Just Peace now compels us to move forward. Yet, to condemn war is not enough; we must do everything in our power to promote justice and peaceful cooperation among peoples and nations. The Way of Just Peace is fundamentally different from the concept of "just war" and much more than criteria for protecting people from the unjust use of force; in addition to silencing weapons it embraces social justice, the rule of law, respect for human rights and shared human security.

11 Within the limitations of tongue and intellect, we propose that Just Peace may be comprehended as *a collective and dynamic yet grounded process of freeing human beings from fear and want, of overcoming enmity, discrimination and oppression, and of establishing conditions for just relationships that privilege the experience of the most vulnerable and respect the integrity of creation.*

LIVING THE JOURNEY

12 Just Peace is a journey into God's purpose for humanity and all creation, trusting that God will "guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79).

13 **The journey is difficult.** We recognize that we must face up to truth along the way. We come to realize how often we deceive ourselves and are complicit with violence. We learn to give up looking for justifications of what we have done, and train ourselves in the practice of justice. This means confessing our wrong-doings, giving and receiving forgiveness and learning to reconcile with each other.

14 The sins of violence and war divide communities deeply. Those who have stereotyped and demonized their adversaries will need long-term support and accompaniment in order to work through their condition and be healed. To reconcile with enemies and to restore broken relationships is a lengthy process as well as a necessary goal. In a process of reconciliation there are no longer powerful and powerless, superior and inferior, mighty and lowly. Both victims and victimizers are transformed.

15 Peace agreements are often fragile, temporary, and inadequate. Places where peace is declared may still be filled with hatred. Repairing the damage of war and violence may take longer than the conflict that caused it. But what exists of peace along the way, though imperfect, is a promise of greater things to come.

16 **We journey together.** The church divided about peace, and churches torn by conflict, have little credibility as witnesses or workers for peace. The churches' power to work for and witness to peace depends on finding a common purpose in the service of peace despite differences in ethnic and national identity, and even in doctrine and church order.

17 We travel as a community, sharing an ethic and practice of peace that includes forgiveness and love of enemies, active nonviolence and respect for others, gentleness and mercy. We strive to give of our lives in solidarity with others and for the common good. We pursue peace in prayer, asking God for discernment as we go and for the fruits of the Spirit along the way.

18 In loving communities of faith that journey together, there are many hands to unburden the weary. One may have a witness of hope in the face of despair; another, a generous love for the needy. People who have suffered much find the courage to keep on living despite tragedy and loss. The power of the gospel enables them to leave behind even the unimaginable burdens of personal and collective sin, of anger, bitterness and hatred, which are the legacy of violence and war. Forgiveness does

not erase the past; but when we look back we may well see that memories were healed, burdens were set aside and traumas were shared with others and with God. We are able to travel on.

19 **The journey is inviting.** With time and dedication to the cause, more and more people hear the call to become peacemakers. They come from wide circles within the church, from other communities of faith, and from society at large. They work to overcome divisions of race and religion, nation and class; learn to stand with the impoverished; or take up the difficult ministry of reconciliation. Many discover that peace cannot be sustained without caring for creation and cherishing God's miraculous handiwork.

20 Sharing the road with our neighbours, we learn to move from defending what is ours towards living generous, open lives. We find our feet as peacemakers. We discover people from different walks of life. We gain strength in working with them, acknowledging our mutual vulnerability and affirming our common humanity. The other is no longer a stranger or an adversary but a fellow human being with whom we share both the road and the journey.

SIGNPOSTS ON THE WAY OF JUST PEACE

21 **Just Peace and the transformation of conflict.** Transforming conflicts is an essential part of peacemaking. The process of transformation begins with unmasking violence and uncovering hidden conflict in order to make their consequences visible to victims and communities. Conflict transformation aims at challenging adversaries to redirect their conflicting interests towards the common good. It may have to disturb an artificial peace, expose structural violence or find ways to restore relationships without retribution. The vocation of churches and religious communities is to accompany the victims of violence and be their advocates. It also includes strengthening civic mechanisms for managing conflicts and holding public authorities and other perpetrators accountable–even perpetrators from within church communities. The "rule of law" is a critical framework for all such efforts.

22 **Just Peace and the use of armed force.** Yet there are bound to be times when our commitment to Just Peace is put to a test, since peace is pursued in the midst of violence and under the threat of violent conflict. There are extreme circumstances where, as the last resort and the lesser evil, the lawful use of armed force may become necessary in order to protect vulnerable groups of people exposed to imminent lethal threats. Yet, even then we recognise the use of armed force in situations of conflict as both a sign of serious failure and a new obstacle on the Way of Just Peace.

23 While we acknowledge the authority of the United Nations under international law to respond to threats to world peace in the spirit and the letter of the UN Charter, including the use of military power within the constraints of international law, we feel obliged as Christians to go further – to challenge any theological or *other* justifications of the use of military power and to consider reliance on the concept of a "just war" and its customary use to be obsolete.

24 We acknowledge the moral dilemma inherent in these affirmations. The dilemma is partially resolved if the criteria developed in the just war tradition may still serve as a framework for an ethic of the lawful use of force. That ethic would allow, for example, consideration of "just policing," the emergence of a new norm in international law around the "responsibility to protect" and the exercise in good faith of the peacemaking mechanisms enshrined in the UN Charter. Conscientious objection to service in armed forces should be recognized as a human right. Much else that is antithetical to peace and the international rule of law must be categorically and finally rejected, starting with the possession or use of all weapons of mass destruction. Our common life invites convergence in thought, action and law for the making and building of peace. As Christians we therefore commit to a transformed ethical discourse that guides the community in the praxis of nonviolent conflict transformation and in fostering conditions for progress toward peace.

25 **Just Peace and human dignity.** Our scriptures teach us that humanity is created in the likeness of God and is graced with dignity and rights. The recognition of this dignity and these rights is central to our understanding of Just Peace. We affirm that universal human rights are the indispensable international legal instrument for protecting human dignity. To that end we hold states responsible for ensuring the rule of law and guaranteeing civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights. However, we observe that abuse of human rights is rampant in many societies, in war and in peace, and that those who should be held accountable benefit from impunity. In response we must reach out in friendship and cooperation to all partners in civil society, including people of other religions, who seek to defend human rights and strengthen the international rule of law.

26 **Just Peace and caring for creation.** God made all things good and has entrusted humankind with the responsibility to care for creation (Gen. 2:4b-9). The exploitation of the natural world and the misuse of its finite resources disclose a pattern of violence that often benefits some people at the expense of many. We know that all creation groans to be set free, not least from the abusive actions of humans (Rom. 8:22). As people of faith, we acknowledge our guilt for the damage we have done to creation and all living things, through action and our inaction. The vision of Just Peace is much more than the restoration of right relationships in community; it also compels human beings to care for the earth as our home. We must trust in God's promise and strive for an equitable and just sharing of the earth's resources.

27 **Building cultures of peace.** We are committed to building cultures of peace in cooperation with people of other religious traditions, convictions and worldviews. In this commitment we seek to respond to the gospel imperatives of loving our neighbours, rejecting violence and seeking justice for the poor, the disinherited and the oppressed (Matt. 5:1-12; Luke 4:18). The collective effort relies on the gifts of men and women, the young and the old, leaders and workers. We acknowledge and value women's gifts for building peace. We recognize the unique role of religious leaders, their influence in societies and the potentially liberating power of religious wisdom and insight in promoting peace and human dignity. At the same time, we lament the cases where religious leaders have abused their power for selfish ends or where cultural and religious patterns have contributed to violence and oppression. We are especially concerned about aggressive rhetoric and teaching propagated under the guise of religion and amplified by the power of media. While we acknowledge with deep humility Christian complicity—past and present—in the manifestation of prejudice and other attitudes that fuel hate, we commit ourselves to build communities of reconciliation, acceptance and love.

28 **Education for peace.** Education inspired by the vision of peace is more than instruction in the strategies of peace work. It is a profoundly spiritual formation of character that involves family, church, and society. Peace education teaches us to nurture the spirit of peace, instil respect for human rights, and imagine and adopt alternatives to violence. Peace education promotes active nonviolence as an unequalled power for change that is practiced and valued in different traditions and cultures. Education of character and conscience equips people to seek peace and pursue it.

SEEKING AND PURSUING JUST PEACE TOGETHER

29 The Christian pilgrimage toward peace presents many opportunities to build visible and viable communities for peace. A church that prays for peace, serves its community, uses money ethically, cares for the environment and cultivates good relations with others can become an instrument for peace. Furthermore, when churches work in a united way for peace, their witness becomes more credible (John 17:21).

FOR PEACE IN THE COMMUNITY

so that all may live free from fear (Micah 4:4)

"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness…?" "Love your neighbor as yourself." "Pray for those who persecute you." (Mic. 6:8; Luke 10:27; Matt. 5:44)

30 **Global challenges.** All too many communities are divided by economic class, by race, color and caste, by religion and gender. Homes and schools are plagued by violence and abuse. Women and children are violated physically, psychologically and by cultural practice. Drug and alcohol abuse and suicide are forms of self-destruction on a large scale. Workplaces and houses of worship are scarred by conflicts within the community. Prejudice and racism deny human dignity. Workers are exploited and industries pollute the environment. Health care is inaccessible for many and affordable for only a few. There is a widening gap between the rich and the poor. Traditions that bind communities together are weakened by commercial influences and imported lifestyles. Media, games and entertainment that promote violence, war and pornography distort community values and invite destructive behaviors. When violence occurs, young males will generally be perpetrators as well as victims and women and children will find themselves at greatest risk.

31 **Main directions.** Churches become builders of a culture of peace as they engage, cooperate and learn from one another. Members, families, parishes and communities will be involved. The tasks include learning to prevent conflicts and transform them; to protect and empower those who are marginalized; to affirm the role of women in resolving conflict and building peace and include them in all such initiatives; to support and participate in nonviolent movements for justice and human rights; and to give peace education its rightful place in churches and schools. A culture

of peace requires churches and other faith and community groups to challenge violence wherever it happens: this concerns structural and habitual violence as well as the violence that pervades media entertainment, games and music. Cultures of peace are realized when all, especially women and children, are safe from sexual violence and protected from armed conflict, when deadly weapons are banned and removed from communities, and domestic violence is addressed and stopped.

32 If churches are to be peacemakers, Christians must first strive for unity in action for peace. Congregations must unite to break the culture of silence about the violence within church life and unite to overcome habitual disunity in the face of the violence within our communities.

FOR PEACE WITH THE EARTH

so that life is sustained

God created the world and made it whole, offering humanity life in all its fullness. Yet sin breaks relationships between people and with the created order. Creation longs for the children of God to be stewards of life, of justice and of love. (Gen. 2:1-3; John 10:10; Romans 8:20-22)

33 **Global challenges.** Human beings are to respect and protect creation. But greed at many levels, self-centeredness and a belief in unlimited growth have brought exploitation and destruction on the earth and its creatures. The cries of the poor and vulnerable echo in the groans of the earth. Excessive consumption of fossil fuels and other limited resources is doing violence to people and the planet. Climate change as a consequence of human lifestyles poses a global threat to just peace. Global warming, the rise of sea levels and the increasing frequency and intensity of droughts and floods affect especially the most vulnerable populations in the world. Indigenous people are exemplary in sustainable living and, along with inhabitants of coral atolls and impoverished coastal communities, they are among those who contribute the least to global warming. Yet they are the ones who will suffer the most.

34 **Main directions.** To care for God's precious gift of creation and to strive for ecological justice are key principles of just peace. For Christians they are also an expression of the gospel's call to repent from wasteful use of natural resources and be converted daily. Churches and their members must be cautious with earth's resources, especially with water. We must protect the populations most vulnerable to climate change and help to secure their rights.

35 Church members and parishes around the world must self-critically assess their environmental impact. Individually and in communities, Christians need to learn to live in ways that allow the entire earth to thrive. Many more "eco-congregations" and "green" churches are needed locally. Much ecumenical advocacy is needed globally for the implementation of international agreements and protocols among governments and businesses in order to ensure a more inhabitable earth not only for us but also for all creatures and for future generations.

FOR PEACE IN THE MARKETPLACE

so that all may live with dignity

In wondrously creating a world with more than enough natural riches to support countless generations of human beings and other living things, God makes manifest a vision for all people to live in fullness of life and with dignity, regardless of class, gender, religion, race or ethnicity. (Ps. 24:1; Ps. 145:15; Is. 65:17-23)

36 **Global challenges.** Even as tiny global elites accumulate unimaginable wealth, more than 1.4 billion humans subsist in extreme poverty. There is something profoundly wrong when the wealth of the world's three richest individuals is greater than the gross domestic product of the world's 48 poorest countries. Ineffective regulation, innovative but immoral financial instruments, distorted reward structures and other systemic factors exacerbated by greed trigger global financial crises that wipe out millions of jobs and impoverish tens of millions of people. The widening socio-economic chasms within and between nations raise serious questions about the effectiveness of market-oriented economic liberalization policies in eradicating poverty and challenge the pursuit of growth as an overriding objective for any society. Over-consumption and deprivation are forms of violence. Global military expenditures—now higher than during the Cold War—do little to enhance international peace and security and much to endanger it; weapons do not address the main threats to humanity but use vast resources that could be rededicated to that end. Such disparities pose fundamental challenges to justice, social cohesion and the public good within what has become a global human community.

37 **Main directions.** Peace in the marketplace is nurtured by creating "economies of life." Their essential foundations are equitable socio-economic relationships, respect for workers rights, the just sharing and sustainable use of resources, healthy and affordable food for all, and broad participation in economic decision-making.

38 Churches and their partners in society must advocate for the full implementation of economic, social and cultural rights. Churches must promote alternative economic policies for sustainable production and consumption, redistributive growth, fair taxes, fair trade, and the universal provisioning of clean water, clean air and other common goods. Regulatory structures and policies must reconnect finance not only to economic production but also to human need and ecological sustainability. Deep cuts in military spending should be made in order to fund programs that advance the goals of sufficient food, shelter, education and health for all people and that provide remedies for climate change. Human and ecological security must become a greater economic priority than national security.

FOR PEACE AMONG THE PEOPLES

so that human lives are protected

We are made in the image of the Giver of Life, forbidden to take life, and charged to love even enemies. Judged with equity by a righteous God, nations are called to embrace truth in the public square, turn weapons into farm implements, and not learn war any more. (Exod. 20:17; Is. 2:1-4; Matt. 5:44)

39 **Global challenges.** Human history is illuminated by courageous pursuits of peace and the transformation of conflict, advances in the rule of law, new norms and treaties that govern the use of force, and now judicial recourse against abuses of power that involve even heads of state. History is stained, however, by the moral and political opposites of these—including xenophobia, inter-communal violence, hate crimes, war crimes, slavery, genocide and more. Although the spirit and logic of violence is deeply rooted in human history, the consequences of such sins have increased exponentially in recent times, amplified by violent applications of science, technology and wealth.

40 A new ecumenical agenda for peace today is even more urgent because of the nature and the scope of such dangers now. We are witnesses to prodigious increases in the human capacity to destroy life and its foundations. The scale of the threat, the collective human responsibility behind it and the need for a concerted global response are without precedent. Two threats of this magnitude—nuclear holocaust and climate change—could destroy much life and all prospects for Just Peace. Both are violent misuses of the energy inherent in Creation. One catastrophe stems from the proliferation of weapons, especially *weapons of mass destruction*; the other threat may be understood as the proliferation of *lifestyles of mass extinction*. The international community struggles to gain control of both threats with little success.

41 **Main directions.** To respect the sanctity of life and build peace among peoples, churches must work to strengthen international human rights law as well as treaties and instruments of mutual accountability and conflict resolution. To prevent deadly conflicts and mass killings, the proliferation of small arms and weapons of war must be stopped and reversed. Churches must build trust and collaborate with other communities of faith and people of different worldviews to reduce national capacities for waging war, eliminate weapons that put humanity and the planet at unprecedented risk, and generally delegitimize the institution of war.

42 **A people born to longing.** Our home is not what it might and will be. While life in God's hands is irrepressible, peace does not yet reign. The principalities and powers, though not sovereign, still enjoy their victories, and we will be restless and broken until peace prevails. Thus our peace building will of necessity criticize, denounce, advocate, and resist as well as proclaim, empower, console, reconcile, and heal. Peacemakers will speak against and speak for, tear down and build up, lament and celebrate, grieve and rejoice. Until our longing joins our belonging in the consummation of all things in God, the work of peace will continue as the flickering of sure grace.

The doctrine of a just war intended by the churches to humanize war is becoming invalid. That is why we need to develop a doctrine of just peace now.

1. VISION FOR JUST PEACE

AN EVOLVING CONCEPT

1 Justice and peace have been ecumenical concerns for more than 100 years. The WCC has spoken out for and intervened in the interest of justice and peace continuously since its foundation in 1948. Under the heading, "War is contrary to the will of God," the Amsterdam Assembly affirmed: "War as a method of settling disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. The part which war plays in our present international life is a sin against God and a degradation of man."

2 One of the most comprehensive statements on the subject was issued by the Vancouver Assembly of the WCC in 1983. It declared: "Peace is not just the absence of war. Peace cannot be built on foundations of injustice. Peace requires a new international order based on justice for and within all nations, and respect for the God-given humanity and dignity of every person. Peace is, as the prophet Isaiah has taught us, the effect

of righteousness." The assembly also affirmed: "We believe that the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethical and theological grounds…."

3 Responding to the growing threats to survival, the same assembly at Vancouver initiated the conciliar process for *Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*. Affirming the full meaning of God's peace in the context of that process, the WCC convocation in Seoul (1990) declared: "We are called to seek every possible means of establishing justice, achieving peace and solving conflicts by active non-violence. We will resist doctrines and systems of security based on the use of and deterrence by, all weapons of mass destruction, and military invasions, interventions and occupations…. We commit ourselves to practice non-violence in all our personal relationships, to work for the banning of war as a legally recognized means of resolving conflicts and to press governments for the establishment of an international order of peacemaking."

4 In the light of the new assessments after the end of the Cold War, and the failures in advancing an international order of peace with justice, and in the face of new wars and failing states, the WCC Central Committee at Johannesburg (1994) established a Programme to Overcome Violence. Its purpose was "challenging and transforming the global culture of violence in the direction of a culture of just peace."-The committee also declared that "in view of the need to confront and overcome the 'spirit, logic and practice of war' and to develop new theological approaches consonant with the teaching of Christ, which start not with war and move to peace, but with the need for justice, this may be the time when the churches, together, should face the challenge to give up any theological or other justification of the use of military power, and to become a *koinonia* dedicated to the pursuit of just peace…."

5 The Harare Assembly of the WCC (1998) called for a Decade to Overcome Violence. In the message to the churches, the Central Committee in 1999 said:

We offer with the Decade to Overcome Violence a truly ecumenical space for encounter, mutual recognition, and common action. We will strive together to overcome the spirit, logic and practice of violence. We will work together to be agents of reconciliation and peace with justice in homes, churches and societies as well as in the political and social and economic structures at global level. We will need cooperation to build a culture of peace that is based on just and sustainable communities. The Gospel vision of peace is a source of hope for change and a new beginning. Let us not betray what is promised to us. People around the world wait with eager longing that Christians become who they are: children of God embodying the message of justice and peace…. Peace is possible. Peace is practical. Make peace.

6 The Ninth Assembly of the WCC in Porto Alegre (2006), at the mid-point of the Decade to Overcome Violence, issued a Call to Recommitment that stated:

The respect for human dignity, the concern for the well-being of the neighbours and the active promotion of the common good are imperatives of the Gospel of Jesus Christ…. Therefore, human rights are a basic element in preventing violence at all levels, individual, interpersonal and collective, and especially violence against women and children. This must include the effort to build and develop the rule of law everywhere. We shall further pursue the understanding of "restorative" or "transformative" justice with the aim of establishing viable and just relationships in communities.

7 The 2006 Assembly further pledged:

To relinquish any theological and ethical justification of violence calls for discernment that draws its strength from a spirituality and discipleship of active non-violence. We have committed ourselves to a profound common ethical-theological reflection and advocacy for non-violent conflict prevention, civilian conflict management and peace consolidation. The praxis of non-violence must be rooted in a spirituality that acknowledges one's own vulnerability; that encourages and empowers the powerless to be able to face up to those who misuse power; that trusts the active presence of the power of God in human conflicts and therefore is able to transcend the seeming lack of alternatives in situations of violence.

8 The Porto Alegre Assembly also asked the Central Committee "to consider a study process engaging all member churches and ecumenical organizations in order to develop an *extensive ecumenical declaration on [just] peace, firmly rooted in an articulated theology*. This should deal with topics such as just peace, the Responsibility to Protect, the role and the legal status of non-state combatants, and the conflict of values (for example, territorial integrity and human rights). It should be adopted at the conclusion of the Decade to Overcome Violence."

9 The decade has brought to light the ramifications and the depth of the culture of violence, which has been dramatized by the recent acts of

international terrorism and the responses to it. Violence has multiple and complex causes, and the churches have reason to acknowledge and repent of their own complicity. The world is approaching a critical moment – an analysis that has already motivated the earlier ecumenical statement on "Economic Threats to Peace" and "Threats to Survival" (1974), as well as the message "Now Is the Time" of the Seoul convocation (1990). Movements and forces that have threatened the further existence of our world in the past are still very much with us, such as nuclear arms and the yawning gap between rich and poor. The emerging world food crisis, the acceleration of environmental degradation and the impact of unmitigated climate change must now be added to that list.

10 What makes this a critical time is the interconnectedness and convergence of all these deadly threats. The experiences and the learning of the Decade to Overcome Violence and the growing awareness of the critical convergence of destabilizing forces in our world have brought the churches to a new place as they consider how to carry out the ministry entrusted to them by Christ to be servants and ambassadors of God's peace and reconciliation. Just Peace now can no longer be considered simply as a counterweight to Just War. What justice and what peace entail takes on more comprehensive meaning in the face of all these interconnected and destabilizing forces on the one hand, and the need for an all-compassing and seamless vision of God's peace with and for creation on the other.

11 The concept of Just Peace first entered ecumenical consideration through the discussions of the "Commission on a Just and Durable Peace" established in 1941 by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. Its "six pillars of peace" envisaged the rebuilding of an international order of peace after the end of World War II. More than 40 years later the 15th General Synod of the United Church of Christ in the USA adopted a pronouncement "Affirming the United Church of Christ as a Just Peace Church" (1985). The pronouncement defines Just Peace as "the interrelation of friendship, justice, and common security from violence" and places the UCC "in opposition to the institution of war."

12 The concept of Just Peace was used in statements by the WCC Central Committee for the first time in 1994, after it had been re-appropriated in the context of declarations during the conciliar process on justice, peace and the integrity of creation. In particular the Dresden ecumenical assembly in 1989 referred to it in the following terms: "Having through necessity overcome the institution of war, the doctrine of a just war intended by the Churches to humanize war is likewise becoming invalid. That is why we need to develop a doctrine of just peace now, grounded in theology and oriented by virtue of its openness towards universal human values." The concept and vision of Just Peace have also served as the fundamental frame of reference in position papers issued by German Catholic Bishops Conference on "A Just Peace" (2000) and by the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany under title "Live from God's Peace – Care for Just Peace" (2007).

13 Having arrived at the projected end of the Decade to Overcome Violence and building on the evaluation of learning and insights that emerged in the course of the decade, the Central Committee of the WCC has issued an *Ecumenical Call for Just Peace* for serious consideration by its member churches and final confirmation at the Busan Assembly in 2013.

14 The call is an attempt to proclaim the vision of Just Peace at this critical time of converging and contending forces, and to spell out where their discipleship calls Christians and churches to commit themselves in the coming years. The call responds to the challenge of going beyond the attitudes of rejection and resistance to violence, since they remain caught all too often in the logic of struggle for power which opposes friend and enemy, and to invite the churches to commit themselves to the way of Just Peace and active peacemaking. What is required is a critical re-appropriation of the age-old wisdom: If you want peace, prepare for peace (not for war). The concept of Just Peace stands for a fundamental shift. The work of Just Peace is shaped by a different framework for analysis and guided by new criteria for action.

15 The following chapters are intended to assist Christian churches, their members as well as their neighbours and partners in other religious communities to engage in serious study and reflection about the central theological, ethical and spiritual implications of the search for Just Peace. The composition of this document has benefited from the discussions and exchanges of experiences during the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation that took place in Kingston, Jamaica, 18-25 May 2011. While the Decade to Overcome Violence has come to an end, the process of building and deepening the ecumenical consensus on justice and peace will continue. The Tenth Assembly of the WCC at Busan in October 2013 will offer an opportunity for the member churches of the WCC through their delegates to offer a clear and united witness for Just Peace.

PEACE IN THE BIBLE

16 The vision for Just Peace receives its inspiration from the biblical tradition. It is a way of rendering in contemporary terms the biblical meaning of *shalom*, which points to the interdependent relationship

between justice and peace. *Shalom* is usually translated as "completeness, soundness, welfare, peace," but *shalom* also links peace with all the following concepts: justice *(mishpat)*, rightness *(tsedeq)* or righteousness *(tsedeqah)*, compassion *(hesed)* and truthfulness *(emet)*. There is no peace without justice *(mishpat)*, and justice implies fair judgment and rectitude, which requires giving what is right and just to the afflicted, establishing and maintaining right relationships in community. Therefore, Just Peace is the effect of righteousness and the practice of truth and justice.

17 The Hebrew word *shalom* shares linguistic roots with the Aramaic and Akkadian words *salamu*, and the Arabic *salaam*, which means "to have enough, to equalize." The Korean word *Pyung Hwa* also suggests that "peace" has to do with being fed and satisfied. These words have the meaning of being faultless, healthy and complete; they indicate safety, prosperity and freedom from strife and political weal. They are about a holistic view of human security, a condition where one is able to live a healthy life, sleep soundly, enjoy one's children and die serenely after a life lived meaningfully. These words encompass the well-being of human beings and of creation, which are intricately interconnected. The Hebrew scriptures are clear in their understanding that peace is lost when illnesses, injustices, poverty, conflict, violence and wars inflict wounds on the bodies and souls of human beings, on society and on the earth. Thus, peace is more than the absence of conflict and war.

18 *Shalom* is related to the Arabic notion of *islam*, which means submission of oneself to God, giving us the understanding that all peace is of God, and the wholeness of human life includes partnership with God who is just, merciful and righteous. Just Peace is ultimately a gift from God. It is the manifestation of God's righteous rule over all of creation and is affirmed as the reliable promise of God's salvation, as expressed in Psalm 85: "Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts. Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land. Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet, righteousness and peace will kiss each other, Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky" (Ps. 85:8-11). God's covenant with Noah after the flood (Gen. 8:20ff.) reveals God's firm purpose of salvation: "For this is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that …my steadfast love shall not be removed from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed…" (Is. 54:9f.). Just Peace is rooted in the assurance that God is faithful to this "covenant of peace." (Ezek. 34:25 and 37:26).

19 In their critique of Israel's unfaithful rulers and their challenge to those who proclaim peace where there is no peace, the prophets, and especially Jeremiah, felt constrained to affirm that God had taken the peace away from the king and the people (Jer. 16:5; cf. also Ezek. 7:25ff). They expected the full restoration of God's *shalom* from a ruler or king who will judge with righteousness. In his just rule he will not only defend the cause of the poor and crush the oppressor, but creation itself will flourish: "May he be like the rain that falls on mown grass, like showers that water the earth. In his day may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more." (Ps. 72:2-7). The prophets looked forward to the time when the nations would come to the mountain of the Lord to receive God's instruction: "He will judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Is. 2:2ff.; Mic. 4:1ff.).

The *oikos* finds its meaning and purpose in the communion of love, justice and peace between the three persons of the Trinity. With our efforts of peace-building we participate in this communion.

20 The full manifestation of *shalom* is expected from the coming of the righteous rule of the messianic prince of peace (Is. 9:5; cf. Zech. 9:9f.). Then peace will be the "overseer" of God's people and righteousness their "taskmaster" (Is. 60:17). *Shalom*, therefore, refers to a social and public reality, rather than merely to an inward attitude. It is dependent on the praxis of justice which forms the very "texture" of *shalom*. Thus, the prophet Isaiah can say: "the effect of righteousness will be peace and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever" (Is. 32:17).

21 When *shalom* is in place, it becomes easier to attempt the priestly invitation: "Be holy, because I the LORD your God am holy" (Lev. 20:7). While *shalom* connotes completeness, *holiness* points toward healthy wholeness. In this connection, *shalom* takes on a spiritual dimension also, and *holiness* is rooted in healthy and healing behaviour as well. *Shalom* and *holiness* are intimately connected; they both have to do with actions, so they are both practical rather than simply conceptual.

22 The comprehensive meaning of *shalom* is carried over into the New Testament and the way it uses the classical Greek word *eirene*. We encounter it in the frequent formulae of greeting: "Peace be with you" (Luke 10:5; Jn 20:19ff.) or "Go in peace" (Mark 5:34; Luke 7:50). Behind the common wish of well-being stands the conviction that this peace is a gift, a blessing from God and represents the powerful reality of God's salvation. The prophetic and apocalyptic message of the reign of God is the

centre of the gospel proclaimed by Jesus. The presupposition of his teaching and healing is that the final, decisive hour has already arrived: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). The New Testament witnesses in their diverse voices that this presupposition holds true: in the person and story of Jesus of Nazareth, the sovereignty of God has "become flesh." In Jesus, God's kingdom was– and is –"in our midst" (cf. Luke 17:21). Jesus proclaimed and lived the good news of the coming kingdom of God, and of its liberating promise of Just Peace.

23 At the birth of Jesus the angels rejoiced: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those whom God favours" (Luke 2:14). God's gift of peace differs from the "pax Romana," which is based on imperial powers. In Jesus the "peace in heaven" has now come into history (Luke 19:38), and the feet of the people will be guided "into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79). The Sermon on the Mount has been called the "covenantal constitution of the kingdom" and with his call to respond with nonviolent resistance to the evildoer, and to love the enemy, Jesus leads the way of Just Peace (Matt. 5:38-48). In the Beatitudes, Jesus blesses the peacemakers, "for they will be called children of God" and to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, he promises the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:9f). This is echoed when the apostle Paul affirms: "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom.14:17). Following in the way of Jesus his disciples are being drawn into the dynamic of the kingdom and called to proclaim God's reign of Just Peace.

24 As the one who through his life, his death and resurrection manifested the eschatological reign of God, Jesus Christ is an embodiment of "our peace" (Eph. 2:14). His life manifests the Spirit of Peace, a peace that the world cannot give and that surpasses human understanding (Phil. 4:7). This peace he bestows upon his disciples: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid" (John 14:27-28). The peace of Jesus is a dynamic reality which overcomes enmity and division (Eph. 2:14-16). Through his death on the cross, Jesus has overcome the very sources of enmity, making it possible for all creation to be brought together in unity through him and be reconciled to God (Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:16.19-20), to one's neighbours (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 19:19), and to the creation.

25 When Just Peace is present, *comfort* (as in the Hebrew *nichem*) is possible. This is the comfort that psalmists and prophets encouraged ("Comfort, comfort, my people…" in Is. 40:1), and for which sufferers (such as Job) long (cf. Ps. 23:4). The comfort of Just Peace will not allow one to be comfortable and complacent, but to be in solidarity with God, with others and with creation. The comfort of Just Peace necessitates the mending of visions, ways, lives and relations, through confession, repentance, transformation and celebration. Just Peace will not prevail without comfort and comforters, and those will not endure without justice.

26 To sum up: Just Peace connotes wholeness. It is not merely an absence of conflict and war, but a state of well-being and harmony in which all relationships are rightly ordered between God, humankind and creation. Just Peace is associated with the reign of God, for which we plea when we pray, *"Let your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven …"*

JUST PEACE AND THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

27 Humanity's efforts of building peace have their place in this world. How does the vision of Just Peace become a source of empowerment, orientation and correction for these efforts? Just Peace is ultimately God's gift for this world which is God's creation, God's household (*oikos*). *Oikos* is a term that includes the habitation for all people; the affairs, relationships and common cause of the people in that *oikos*, as well as their dwelling place, their home, and their environment (Eph. 2:19-22). The members of the *oikos* have the basic responsibility of working for the good of all people (Gal. 6:10). In the ancient Greek world, *oikoumene* was understood to refer to the whole world as an administrative unit and, for some time, was equated with the Roman Empire (Luke 2:1). In a broader sense, the New Testament writers understood *oikoumene* as the earth and all of its inhabitants (Luke 2:10; 4:5; Acts 17:30-31). Yet, the followers of Jesus Christ, living with the expectation that the consummation of the kingdom of God will bring "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1) began to look towards the *oikoumene to come* (Heb. 2:5). Eventually, this word would provide the origin for "ecumenical." The community of faith, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone" (Eph. 2:20) was seen as a sign of the reconciliation of human beings to God and to one another. It not only points to a future reality, but is already the effective beginning of the new creation (2 Cor. 5:17f.), built like living stones into a "spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:4f.), the true household of God.

28 In the perspective of the kingdom of God, peace-building and reconciliation become important dimensions of life together in the household of God. If all members of the community are to experience well-being as the fruit of living in truth, justice and peace in the household,

then all are called to participate in the process of peace-building, spiritual strengthening and edification *(oikodome)*. Each is called to be a builder of the house *(oikodomos)* and thus a peace-builder, one who strives to make the community of faith a sign of healing, reconciliation and justice in the world, and thus restores wellness and wholeness to the whole household of God (Rom. 14:19, Luke 12:42f.). The process of healing requires dismantling of cultures of abuse and violence. Jesus demonstrated through his life the work of such an *oikodomos*. He fed the hungry, healed the sick and comforted the lonely. He restored sight to the blind and gave voice to those who could not speak.

29 Just Peace is God's gift to humanity. It both sustains history and prefigures its fulfilment. The community of those who follow Jesus Christ in the way of Just Peace are called to live as that force within humanity which witnesses to and manifests God's purpose of salvation through justice, peace, reconciliation and healing. They are called to be present in the places where peace is endangered and to be God's ambassadors of reconciliation, to mediate situations of conflict, to give courage to the weary, and to comfort those who suffer (Matt. 5:4; 2 Cor. 1:3f; 5, 19f.). They are assured the guidance and help of the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit (John 14:26). Indeed, it is the working of the Holy Spirit that sustains the vision of Just Peace and faith in God's saving presence in settings where God seems to be absent. The Holy Spirit reveals the eschatological horizon of peace pointing towards the time when "God will be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28).

THE GOD OF JUST PEACE

30 Who is this God who is revealed in the gift of peace? In the Hebrew scriptures God is revealed to us as the *creator* of the world and of all that is in it, who in the covenant with Noah has promised to protect the creation from destruction and who judges all peoples in faithfulness, justice and mercy. The New Testament confesses that God has sent his only *Son* for the salvation of the world (John 3:16), thus overcoming enmity and reconciling the world to Godself (2 Cor. 5:19). It also confesses God as the *Spirit*, the liberator and giver of life (1 Cor. 15:45; cf. also 2 Cor. 3:17) who empowers people to enter and persist in the struggle against the forces of death and darkness and thus to participate in God's purpose of building peace. The early church appropriated this dynamic understanding of God by confessing God as the Holy Trinity, the communion of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian foundation enables us to conceive of creation, salvation and sanctification as one great movement within God and not to isolate them from each other. It allows us to see the God who freed Israel from slavery as the same God who took on human form in Jesus Christ and who since then continues to inhabit this world, in order to free it from violence and lead it to the fullness of life – for people of all religions, and for the whole of creation. Just Peace, therefore, does not begin with a static concept of God, but rather a dynamic one, that expresses the great movement of love within the divine communion.

31 As Christians we believe that in Christ we *participate* in this divine communion. This has implications for our efforts of peace-building. It is God who through Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit establishes the reign of peace and justice. Following in the way of Jesus Christ we participate in the dynamic of God's reign of peace and therefore we can work to transform conflicts, to defend human dignity and the sanctity of life, to promote just and sustainable communities and to build cultures of peace.

32 In Trinitarian perspective God and creation are not set at infinite distance from each other. Rather they are in profound relationship with each other. It is God's blessing and the life-giving Spirit that maintain the delicate web of relationships in all of creation, which reveal the reality of God – creating and sustaining, healing and redeeming, bringing to fulfilment and reconciliation in peace.

33 The *oikos* of the world and of the church, the *oikoumene* of God's design and purpose, therefore, are not arbitrary constructs. The *oikos* finds its meaning and purpose in the communion of love, justice and peace among the three persons of the Trinity. With our efforts of peace-building we participate in this communion. Therefore, peace-building is not just about repairing what has been broken, but about expanding and completing relationships that make the *oikos* a mirror of God.

34 What does this tell us, then, about God, about peace, about ourselves?

- That God is triune reveals a commitment to communion, to the fullness *(pleroma)* of creation and the difference and diversity of creation.
- God is at once a God of peace and justice, of mercy and truthfulness, all of which are in profound embrace (Ps. 85:10-14).
- Peace is an embrace of all creation. Our relations with God, with one another and with the earth are not based on the pursuit of interest or arbitrary choice. They are the bonds of love.
- In Jesus Christ, who is our peace (Eph. 2:14), God has entered the

world, knows our brokenness, embraces our vulnerability, and is reconciling all things in himself (Col. 1:19-20).

- As created in the image of God and thus participating in the divine communion, human beings have the potential to build peace and overcome violence. They are called to act as mediators and "priests of creation" co-operating with God in resisting the forces of death and destruction.
- The International Ecumenical Peace Convocation meets under the theme: "Glory to God and Peace on earth." They are held together in cruciform fashion – emblematic of the cross of Christ that stands as a sign of our reconciliation with God (the vertical beam) and with all creation (the horizontal beam). Ascending praise is answered by descending peace. Glory to God *(doxa)* is manifested in the building *(praxis)* of peace.

CHURCH AS INSTRUMENT OF PEACE-BUILDING

35 The New Testament does not give any systematic definition of the church, but offers a broad spectrum of images that try to introduce us to the reality of the church, both earthly and transcendent, and invite us to embrace this reality. Among the most striking images are the church as the people of God, as the Body of Christ, as the temple of the Holy Spirit, where the holiness of God dwells on earth; and as communion (Nature and Mission of the Church, §§19-24).

36 One of the major distinctive features of the church is its being a sign of peace and reconciliation. In its liturgy, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, the church remembers and re-presents how God reconciled the world through Christ and the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the liturgy is an act of memory of what God has already done for us in Christ's life, death and resurrection. It is also the window on the eschatological hope, that has been promised to us, of the bringing together of all things. In variegated ways, our liturgical traditions illustrate how God's peace is communicated to us. They call us to share this peace with each other and to carry it into the world. Despite our shortcomings and failures as human beings, God's peace can be experienced in the lives of individuals, in families, in partnerships and in communities.

37 *Peace and Church Unity:* The various images by means of which the New Testament describes the church (body, temple etc.) unambiguously show that the church cannot but be one. This is the reason why divisions within the Christian community have been perceived, as early as the apostolic times, to be a factor distorting the very character of the church as a sign of peace and reconciliation and jeopardizing its witness of Jesus' cross and resurrection. Today, the very disunity of the churches of God on central elements – such as the sacraments – has undermined the churches' credibility. However, different as they are, our liturgical traditions have obviously preserved the awareness that the unity of the church and its being a sign of God's peace are interdependent and condition each other. Through the variety and richness of our liturgies, we can discern a thread emphasizing that what we experience in our daily church life ought to be a partial, yet real anticipation of the eschatological bringing together of all things implemented by God. Thus, liturgically speaking, Christian unity is not an optional luxury, but a direct implication of the peace of God communicated to the church. Striving after a new paradigm combining justice and peace, the churches are invited to do *justice* to this interrelatedness of peace and unity, as witnessed in their liturgical practice, through a dynamics of spiritual ecumenism of repentance and conversion of the heart *(metanoia)*. This dynamics is meant to strengthen/deepen the openness of the churches to the Holy Spirit's gift of reconciliation.

38 As a place in which the Holy Spirit dwells and acts, the church is prophetic in its very nature. It has the special vocation of discerning and proclaiming God's intention for the world and pointing to how this intention unfolds in concrete actions. Accordingly, the churches are called to speak out against injustice, to advocate peace, to show solidarity with the oppressed and to accompany victims. Refusing to condone violence, and following a way of nonviolence indicate how Christians are to respond to a violent world. Jesus met his own violent death with nonviolence, and his way remains the model for Christians to follow in overcoming violence.

39 To be a prophetic sign of peace in a violent world requires commitment, courage and consistency. These are virtues that the churches have not always displayed. Here we must as Christians confess our sin if we are to be credible vessels of the prophetic message entrusted to us. Churches have at times allied themselves so closely with violent policies that they have legitimized them. When the churches have embraced the banner of nationalism or ethnicity and have blessed the oppression and extermination of "enemies," they have wandered away from their true vocation. When they have adopted beliefs that legitimize violence as a way of cleansing the world or as a purported instrument of the wrath of God, they have betrayed their true nature. When they have turned away from suffering, either to seek or protect their own prosperity or not to get "involved," they are like those who left the wounded man in the ditch (Luke 10:31-32). And the very disunity within the churches themselves on cen-

tral elements – such as the sacraments – has undermined the churches' credibility. Churches must be constantly ready to examine their discourse and actions, as well as their inaction, in the light of the gospel, to repent, and to seek forgiveness. To that end, the service of the churches must exhibit the willingness to embrace vulnerability and the unwavering commitment to the poor and marginalized that marked the ministry of Christ.

40 If the churches are to serve the purposes of God, to be a "sign and instrument of God's intention and plan for the whole world" (Nature and Mission of the Church, §40), they are called to concrete actions in the service of just peace. Just peace is not just a view of life. It is also a way of life. In a world beset by violence and threatened by all kinds of destabilizing forces, it means cultivating a spiritual posture, a spirituality. By spirituality is not meant a pick-and-choose of preferred elements to craft a unique or distinctive lifestyle. Spirituality means deepening a mind-set and engaging in those spiritual practices, especially communal ones that lead deeper into the mystery of Christ (cf. chapter 2, paragraph 55ff).

The churches can help to promote the formation of capacities within civil society for prevention of violence and transformation of conflicts.

2. SIGNPOSTS FOR JUST PEACE

INTERPRETING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

1 "You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times" (Matt. 16:3).

2 Interpreting the signs of the times has been a preoccupation of many Christian groups and anxiety about the end times seems always to have been a feature of Christianity. Yet the term "signs of the times" is found only in one place in the New Testament, Matt. 16:1-3. In that episode, Jesus responds to a demand for a miracle as a sign of God's approval, by chastising those making the demand. He contrasts their skill at interpreting the signs of nature (red skies and dark clouds) with their lack of ability to distinguish the signs of the times—and to act accordingly. Discerning the signs of the times requires response more so than do the signs of nature.

3 Perhaps influenced by the apocalyptic elements in the gospels (Mark 13) and Revelation, in many Christian interpretations, the "signs

of the times" have often been identified with the terrifying events which are expected to precede the end of the world—earthquakes, floods, wars, heat waves, deadly diseases, culminating in God's main event, the Battle of Armageddon.[1] Indeed, in a world threatened by nuclear war and acts of terrorism, many argue that times are getting worse and this is an indication of "the end times." Indeed, some groups are obsessed with looking for time clues as indications of the impending destruction of the world – SARS, 9/11, worldwide violence and disaster in the Middle East.[2] However, many other Christians read the story differently. There is another more fruitful tradition concerning the signs of the times, which is demonstrated, *inter alia*, in the Roman Catholic Social Teaching. In the 1960s, for example, the Catholic Church began to employ the term in an optimistic fashion, and Pope John XXIII in *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) continued the optimistic tone when he spoke of developments in human history which Christians ought not to respond to with fear or resistance. Rather, such events are to be viewed as instruments of divine revelation. Through these events God may be calling humanity to recognise new challenges and in so doing exercise creativity in finding new ways of meeting these challenges. Through these challenges God may be calling us in a deep way to conversion *(metanoia)*, a change of heart and mind (Mark 1:15).

4 *A changing world:* The world in which we look for the signs of divine revelation has undergone major changes within the last several decades and that process of change continues rapidly. Nonetheless, the material and scientific advances that have been the hallmark of the globalised world have not been without ambiguity. In fact, they point us to contradictory interpretations of the signs of the times—possibilities for progress or dangerous nightmares and increased suffering.[3]

5 Advances in technology have decisively shaped the patterns of our lives, including our religious life. Transportation and communication are two of the areas in which this technological advance is most evident. Our ability to connect with others is no longer limited by geography. We have faster means of directly experiencing unknown places and people; our ideas and decisions can be influenced by people in distant places in a fashion that was unthinkable even ten years ago—satellite, cellular phones, the internet have broadened our world, in one sense, while narrowing it in another. Communication with others is a constant and highlights our interdependence and the challenge of building and sustaining human solidarity. Exposure to the breadth of human culture and belief oftentimes means that lifestyle choices are diverse and several; even religious beliefs and values are subject to choice in a way they were not previously. Multiple perspectives, claims and authorities now compete for our loyalties.

Indeed there is the increasing possibility of mobilizing people and resources around shared goals. New technologies, new drugs, new surgical interventions have all improved the health of so many, especially in the well-resourced nations.

6 In many resource-rich countries of the world, adequate food, shelter, and clothing are no longer daily preoccupations. Improvements in education have broadened the life choices of many, especially women and minority groups. Progress in education has helped human beings to understand our dignity and uniqueness as human persons, as well as the meaning and responsibilities of personal and political freedom.[4] Many societies are being transformed as population shifts have impacted cultures, ethnicities, nationalities, languages. The developments in global communications and transportation have also facilitated the emergence of global markets for goods, services and capital. Global growth and economic prosperity has expanded the freedom and life choices of many.

7 Money is a major international commodity and is subject to global pressures; it increasingly affects the fate of nations, as has been so clearly demonstrated in the current financial crisis.[5] Increasing gaps continue to open up between the materially well off and those who are not, inside countries and between them. Clearly progress has left problems such as poverty unsolved while creating and exacerbating others: the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, international conflicts, civil wars, economic crises, ecological disasters (e.g., massive oil spills, thousands of species driven into extinction), pollution, contamination of the food supply, of water, of the atmosphere (e.g., the earth's ozone layer), faulty and dangerous manufactured products, high tech and violent crime of all varieties, and, what Richard McBrien refers to as "the crowding out of spiritual values."

8 *Societies are being changed by the waves of refugees and immigrants.* Communication technologies that link us to distant persons may serve to distance us from those physically present—family, co-workers, neighbours, friends.[6] Yet even as it opened up possibilities of personal choice, education has exposed us to further manipulation by advertisers, governments, business and even religion. Education has been used as a means of social and psychic socialization. Even as we experience our connectedness and interdependence, we find our age riddled with racial and ethnic conflicts, increased criminal brutality. Religion has not escaped the effects of the changes at play today. Many persons are abandoning religion and the abandonment of faith in God is an increasing and widespread phenomenon. All of these are a threat to the peace of the planet.

9 "[Yet] God gives hints of his will in each age, but believers must be

Paradoxically, in the eyes of many the Bible seems to have lost the power to shape our social and political imagination; at the same time, it serves as the divine sanction for the political claims of many.

attentive to them. The saying [signs of the times] is an invitation to the hermeneutics of history and as such a permanent challenge to the church."[7] It is in the unfolding of history that God speaks. All around the world the Divine continues to speak to humanity in the very moments when we are at our lowest point and in those places where we need to live out and experience the fullness of our humanity. Clearly, embedded in the concern about the signs of the times is the notion that "the world has come from the creative hand of God, as having been redeemed and renewed by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, as embodying now the presence and activity of God...and as being destined for eternal glory."[8] Reading the signs of the times is necessary in order to discern God's will and to acknowledge and validate the presence of God in creation. It is in light of this divine invitation that Samuel Kobia, former general secretary of the WCC, exhorts us, "Brothers and sisters, we are called to discern the signs of the times, and to take responsibility for our actions: we are called to confront the forces of sin and death, to face down the false messiahs, to open our lives and the lives of our churches to the witness of the Holy Spirit."[9]

10 *Reading the Bible today:* The Bible continues to have a powerful influence in contemporary times; interpreting it authentically therefore remains an important responsibility. "To read the Bible in the public square in these times is to take on a challenging task. Issues of hunger, poverty and violence are urgent and call for our response."[10] Paradoxically, in the eyes of many the Bible seems to have lost the power to shape our social and political imagination; at the same time, it serves as the divine sanction for the political claims of many.

11 *Responsible biblical interpretation necessitates reading the signs of the times.* To do this requires taking seriously the political context in which the reading is done. In so doing, the engagement with scripture needs recognise the variety of ways that it can be approached: as a positive resource, a source of cultural criticism, a negative model to recognise and resist, a powerful text with an ambiguous history, and as a means of understanding the meaning of contemporary events[11]. We must be alert to the fact that religious language has been and is still allied with economic and social systems in order to maintain and perpetuate them. Jesus was a model for political engagement as he criticised the alliance of religious symbols with coercive power, much in the same way the ancient Hebrew prophets did. We can employ a method of correlation which involves scrutinising the signs of the time and interpreting them in light of the gospel. This calls us to be able to identify the key characteristics of the present age and to use the message of the gospels to illuminate them. Our ethical concerns with issues such as poverty, violence, domination, oppression shape the questions we ask of the scripture.

THE BIBLE AND VIOLENCE[12]

12 Striving for Just Peace is an expression of the response to the reality of violence that is inspired by the way of Jesus Christ. Jesus was realistic about the dynamic of violence in human community. He knew that those "who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matt. 26:52). Violence cannot be overcome by violence; for any violent resistance against violence is subject to the same logic and only continues the cycle of violence. Therefore this cycle, the very dynamic of violence, must be interrupted at its source, i.e., regarding the other as a rival and potential enemy. The renunciation of violence that Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount is not an advice of acquiescence and passive submission, but the encouragement to refuse to respond to violence in its own terms and the effort to transform a situation of confrontation and enmity into a relationship of communication and mutuality. This alternative praxis which actively challenges the logic of violence is rooted in the conviction that God will ultimately overcome the evil of violence and anticipates God's rule of love and compassion.

13 Religions have at their core a message of life, of peace and justice, of mutuality and right relationships in community. However, for this very reason religions have to face up to the pervasive presence of violence in human life and its destructive power. Violence, from a religious perspective, is a manifestation of evil and all religions are struggling with the question where this evil comes from and how it can be overcome. *There can therefore be no authentic affirmation of peace within any religious tradition without facing up to the challenge of violence in human community life.*

14 Primal religions respond to the question of the origin as well as the limitation of violence by way of myths which bind together the human and divine dimensions of reality. Myths are a reflection of fundamental human experience and represent the inner core of cultures, including religion, in their response to violence. Many such myths depict a struggle between order and chaos. The created world is constantly in danger of slipping back into chaos and order can only be maintained through "re-

demptive violence." Understanding and interpreting the language of such foundational myths therefore is essential for clarifying the relationship of religion and violence. By establishing a close link between religious myths and the corresponding rituals, on the one hand, and the pervasive presence of violence in human life on the other, by integrating violence into the sacred, religions aim at containing the destructive influence of violence in order to establish peace and a viable order. Because order and life are constantly threatened by violence, violence is being absorbed into the sacred. It is this ambiguity of religion with regard to violence which calls for critical reflection within all religious traditions.

15 *There is no question that the religious ambiguity regarding violence is present in the Christian tradition as well.* The Bible is full of stories of violence and of violent images even with reference to God. At the very least the Bible presents a very realistic picture of the potential of violence in human life. However, an analysis of the account of primeval history in the early chapters of the Bible shows a decisive difference to the myths of other ancient traditions. In fact, violence is absent from God's creation which is considered to be "very good" (Gen. 1:31). Human beings are created in God's image to share life in community with God and with one another (Gen. 1:26-27). After bringing forth all other creatures on the earth, God created humankind from the soil *(ha adamah)* and breathed life into it (Gen. 2:7). All human beings embody this tension: Made from dust and earth, they share in the vulnerability and mortality of all living things. At the same time they participate in God's life, gifted with freedom and endowed with the calling to participate in God's creating and sustaining work, cultivating life with other creatures for the flourishing of all.

16 According to the biblical account the potential of violence enters at the moment when the first human beings, after having eaten the fruit from the forbidden tree, acquire the knowledge of good and evil, i.e., the capacity to judge and to discern. The presentation of the first occurrence of violence in the murder of Abel by Cain shows a remarkable characteristic: Cain cannot accept the failure of his sacrifice and feels rejected. The following dialogue between Cain and God de-mythologizes violence even before the act itself: "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it" (Gen. 4:6).The sin of violence has become a reality in the life of human community and Cain has been made responsible for the act of killing his brother. But then God protects him from revenge. He and his descendants are presented as the pioneers of human culture (Gen. 4:17ff.). Yet, as the early chapters of the Bible tell us, this first act of divine containment of the potential of violence fails and violence increases to the point that God attempts through the flood to eradicate violence once and for all (Gen. 6:5ff.). Then God recognizes that violence cannot be overcome by means of violence (Gen. 8:21). God's covenant with Noah expresses God's will to maintain life even in the face of enduring violence (Gen. 9:8ff.). God's alternative to violence is the protection of human life through the gift of the law which centres around the prohibition of human beings killing each other (Ex. 20:13). The protection of human life is entrusted to the observance of God's law which remains the primary means of reducing and limiting the occurrence of violence[13]. Human beings are free to distinguish between good and evil; they can decide against the rivalry of coveting the other's life, property or being tempted by other gods; they are made responsible by God to control their potential of violence for the sake of life.

17 While the active limitation of violence is the dominant theme of the biblical ethos, the ambiguity appears in passages which present God as the origin of war and violence, and especially in the passages about the wars of conquest connected with Israel's entry into the Promised Land. These wars, which are presented as executing a divine command, especially with regard to placing the ban on the conquered community, have often been characterized as "holy wars," thus seemingly giving a religious legitimization to war with highly questionable consequences in later history of wars fought with religious sanctioning. What is mostly being overlooked, however, is the fact that these wars are taken out of human control: war is not considered as a legitimate means of human politics. The fighting of war is under the exclusive control of God; it is God's ultimate means to save and protect the people who are urged to entrust themselves to God's power who will struggle for them. This becomes the basis of the prophetic criticism of the power politics of the kings of Israel and of the expectation of a final end to war and violence when people will no longer fight against each other but forge their instruments of war into tools for cultivation (Is. 2/Mic. 4).

18 The other biblical context in which violent language is being used in direct reference to God are the many psalms of lamentation which call on God to destroy an oppressive enemy. These psalms are to be read first of all as a manifestation of the experience of violence, of being exploited, marginalized and treated unjustly. However, based on the faith conviction that revenging the victims of injustice and restoring the weak to their rightful place is in the hands of God (Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19), these psalms present their anger and feelings of aggression to God instead of repressing them or acting them out against the enemy. They entrust retribution and retaliation to God as the final judge who will vindicate the

victims of violence. This conviction that God takes the side of those who suffer under, and become the victims of violence can be regarded as the common thread throughout the biblical tradition.

19 The same critical discernment is needed in reading the violent passages in the book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible. These passages are to be read from the perspective of the victims of violent oppression. The language of the Apocalypse uses myths and symbolic images to identify the evil of violence and in this hidden form of communication it aims at strengthening and empowering the people in their resistance. It intends to uncover the real forces behind the prevailing manifestations of power and violence and to reveal the true power of God. Through this form of symbolic, religious interpretation the apocalyptic literature is able to transform the experience of real violence and thus to become a source of hope and encouragement. However, here as well we witness the ambiguity in the relationship between religion and violence, because some have tended to read the "hidden language" of the book of Revelation as providing religious legitimacy for the "political" scenario of the inevitable final confrontation between the forces of good and evil by referring to the mythical battle at Armageddon (Rev. 16:16).

20 The greatest challenge for the Christian interpretation of the relationship between religion and violence has been the violent death of Jesus and its significance. Was his death on the cross a necessary part of his mission or was it rather a sign of ultimate failure? Does the violence of his death have a place in God's plan or was it rather the evidence of his having been abandoned? How to understand that God would allow the one who had completely entrusted his life and mission into God's hands to become a victim of violence? If we approach these questions from the biblical understanding of God who seeks to contain violence, taking the side of and protecting the victims of violence, and if we consider Jesus' own refusal to respond to violence with violent means, but rather to establish an alternative praxis of overcoming enmity and violence by love and forgiveness, we can understand his vicarious suffering and death as God's way to unmask the logic of violence and its sacrificial legitimization and thus to break the cycle of violence and death. The violence which was meant to destroy and eliminate Jesus has lost its mythical sacred power through his very death and resurrection. Thus the link between religion and violence, the possibility of religious legitimization of violence, is abolished.

21 *However, throughout history Christians and churches have fallen back into the tendency of legitimating violence on the basis of selective interpretation of the biblical tradition.* While the early Christian community followed the example of the alternative praxis initiated by Jesus and the apostles and saw in the nonviolent witness of the martyrs the seedbed of the church, things changed when Christianity became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. The use of war and violence for the purpose of maintaining and expanding the unity of church and empire became an accepted feature. The persecuted church of the first centuries became itself an agent of persecution, first against Jews in the Byzantine Empire, then in the form of the militant missionary expansion into northern Europe, leading to the compulsory baptism of whole peoples under the threat of the sword. These were followed by the crusades to liberate the Holy Land from Muslim rule and found their continuation in the Inquisition and the Reconquista in Spain, and finally the violent incursion of the Conquista into Latin America. This dark side of the Christian symbiosis of religion and violence culminated in the wars of religion in the period of the Reformation and post-Reformation in Europe. The traces of this unholy alliance of religion and violence are still with us in the crusading language of the "war on terrorism", in the justification of the use of war and violence for the purposes of maintaining order and justice ("just war"), in the dualistic view of the human condition and of the world which operates with a clear distinction between good and evil, friend and enemy, often supported by arguments from apocalyptic language about the eschatological struggle between the rule of God and the powers of darkness.

22 The task ahead of us both in internal Christian critical reflection and in interreligious encounter and dialogue is to unmask the logic and dynamic of violence and its dehumanizing and destructive consequences. In particular, the unholy alliance between religion and violence must be broken for the sake of life for all. The consequence must be an utter realism about the dynamics of violence in contemporary life and its roots in a view of human nature as being under the domination of the struggle for survival in which only the strongest and fittest will be able to maintain themselves. This alleged realistic view is a denial both of human freedom and responsibility as well as of the human capacity for sympathy and solidarity, for forming communities of mutuality and cooperation. All religions are trustees of the wisdom of nurturing and maintaining community and of shaping right and mutually sustainable relationships. Violence in all its forms, whether interpersonal, social or structural, constitutes a break and a denial of community. It reflects the inability or the refusal to live with differences, to acknowledge the otherness of the other. It arises from the urge to shape the other according to one's own image, to dominate or in the extreme case to exclude or eliminate the other as a threat to one's own identity.

23 It is precisely the encounter with the holy, with God as the tran-

scendent other, which is the source of the basic trust in oneself, in other persons and in the world, and thus the basis of community in the sense of engaging in trusted relationships with those who are and remain different. Violence is not innate in human nature. Humans are capable of transforming the destructive energy of violence into a constructive force nurturing life. The struggle against the "spirit, logic and praxis of violence" includes more than the development and application of ways of peaceful, nonviolent means of resolving conflicts. It is a moral and spiritual struggle in which the religious communities have to take the lead, beginning with the critical assessment of their own involvement in the emergence of a culture of violence.

THE FACES OF VIOLENCE

24 *During the Decade to Overcome Violence the Christian community has become aware of the contemporary reality of violence and has been obliged to acknowledge its complicity in maintaining the culture of silence regarding the presence of violence, even in its own life.* The voice of the victims of violence begins to be heard, but all too often violence is still hidden and entrenched in structures of injustice and those responsible escape accountability. The commitment to follow the way of Just Peace requires the courage to unmask the dynamic of violence and its destructive consequences for the life of human communities and for the integrity of creation. It means making visible the victims and the perpetrators and to enable them to acknowledge their condition as a consequence of violence.

25 However, the different faces and manifestations of violence and their complex interrelationships defy any straightforward "definition" or analysis. The task is further complicated by the fact that violence, power and force are very often used interchangeably. A purely descriptive or phenomenological account misses the hidden features. Philosophers, anthropologists and social scientists have offered interpretations of the nature and root causes of violence.

26 The ecumenical movement has struggled with the reality of violence for many decades, focussing especially on the question of violence in the context of the struggles for justice and liberation. In its response to the 1973 report on "Violence, Nonviolence and the Struggle for Social Justice", the central committee of the WCC stated: "In recent years we have learnt that violence has many faces. It is not merely a matter of physical harm intentionally inflicted upon an individual in an obvious, dramatic way. The ecumenical encounter, especially since the World Conference on Church and Society (Geneva 1966), has sharpened our awareness of the violence which is built into many of the world's existing social, political and economic structures. There is no easy way of defining precisely this enlarged concept of violence and the terminological problem becomes infinitely more difficult when moving from one language, culture or distinctive political situation to another."[14] The Central Committee, therefore, called for continued work of conceptual and semantic clarification. However, even the subsequent efforts, especially in the context of the decade, have not removed the ambiguities surrounding the concept of violence.

27 *In this present context of biblical-theological reflections on the vision of Just Peace, it is appropriate to start from the understanding of violence in the biblical tradition.* Violence as the opposite of *shalom* is a manifestation of evil which not only threatens the life of another human person but destroys the life-sustaining relationships within the community and with the created world. Violence is clearly associated with human action. It is the result of the sinful, intentional failure to be responsive to the demands of living in community with God, with one another and with the world of God's creation. While the physical harm inflicted intentionally upon another human person is the most dramatic manifestation of violence, the dynamic of violence has deeper roots in the perversities of the human heart; it begins with the emotions of anger, with deliberate insults or acts undermining the dignity of another person (Matt. 5:21ff.). God's gift of the law, especially in the basic form of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17), has the purpose to protect not only individual persons but the community and its vital relationships from the destructive influence of violence. The commandments establish a protective fence around the life of the community; each of the commandments – and not only the prohibition to kill another person – formulates basic rules for a life in community without the threat of violence[15].

28 Beyond the immediate purpose of protection the commandments implicitly point to social and political conditions in the form of basic social institutions that are meant to prevent the intrusion of violence into the community. Taken together they constitute an elementary social doctrine about the shape of a community that is able to minimize violence. The essential building elements of this social structure are: the family, work and property, public truth, freedom and observance of the law.

29 This brief account of a biblical understanding of violence can help to identify the different faces of violence and their interrelationship. What is essential is the insight that acts of violence not only threaten or harm individual persons but that they undermine and destroy the life-sustaining relationships within the community and with the world of creation. At

Violence manifests itself more indirectly and is often hidden in economic, social and political structures that limit or deny the basic guarantees for life.

the *personal level* the most gruesome forms of violence are intentional humiliation and hurt, sexual abuse, rape and murder, abandonment and starvation. The concern for the victims of such acts of violence must not divert attention from the failure of social institutions to provide protection and to prevent the manifestation of violence. Particular attention must be given to the influence of the media in furthering a culture of violence.

30 At the *level of societies* violence manifests itself more indirectly and is often hidden in economic, social and political structures that limit or deny the basic guarantees for life at least for parts of the population. These guarantees include, following a report of the Nairobi Assembly of the WCC in 1975, the entitlements to decent work, to adequate food, to basic health care, to decent housing and to education for the full development of the human potential. They correspond largely to the contemporary understanding of "human security" and their denial is considered as a manifestation of "structural violence." The statement of the Central Committee quoted above indicates the problem of arriving at conceptual clarity with regard to this enlarged understanding of violence which is still surrounded by controversy. More clarity is needed regarding the question when structures of injustice in society become a manifestation of "structural violence" and where to place the (failure of) responsibility that is at the origin of any act of violence. However, an indirect support for this perspective on social violence can be found in the concept of "structural sin" that has found entry into the social doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.[16]

31 The effects of structural violence have been aggravated by the impact of globalization on the social fabric and the economic and political structures of many, in particular developing countries. The consequences of adjustments policies imposed by the International Financial Institutions and the pressures to enter into inequitable trade agreements have furthered the accumulation of debts and have destabilized governments which lose the capacity to provide for the "human security" of their citizens. The victims of this form of indirect, structural violence include farmers committing suicide because of unmanageable debts, indigenous peoples deprived of their ancestral land through policies of land-grabbing, economic and environmental migrants suffering discrimination and exclusion. The most vulnerable among all these groups are women and children.

32 At the *level of nations* and their relationships violence is experienced in acts of war, today especially the so called "new wars" fought by warlords and supported by war economies; in organized criminal networks; in terrorism – including the "war on terror" – in the grim realities of millions of displaced people and refugees; in children being forced into soldiering and prostitution; in racism, ethnocentrism and the deliberate fuelling of enmity between peoples and ethnic or religious groups. Structures of enmity describe the fact that the fabric of societies is woven with conflicting interests and deep-seated divisions. They have at their basis imbalances and irresponsible uses of power and can become the seed bed of violence

33 *Finally, violence also expresses itself in the irresponsible disregard for and intrusion into the delicate ecological balances in the natural world* through reckless exploitation of common goods such as drinking water and fossil fuels, the felling of forests, the over fishing of the seas and oceans, the extinction of species. Some of these forms of violence have become as it were "habitual." This refers to abuses of human power which have become tacitly accepted, such as a thoughtless consumerist life-style, taking the gifts of nature for granted or treating human beings as "resource material" and "objects" of desire. Habitual violence is also reflected in the attitude that accepts wars as "natural" or in the belief of many victims, especially women, that abuses toward them are unavoidable. This expression of violence has been hidden for too long and is only gradually being acknowledged as the destructive consequences for human action become manifest, e.g. in the dramatic implications of climate change.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE WAY OF JUST PEACE

34 The way of Just Peace has to be traced continuously anew in the midst of the reality of violence, responding not only to its direct forms, whether in interpersonal violence or in armed, violent conflict, but also to its indirect expression as "structural violence", whether through governmental oppression and abuse of power or through business practises and economic systems which exploit vulnerable communities and the environment. In confronting these different manifestations of violence and destructive conflict, Christians and their communities, inspired by the Spirit of the Beatitudes and committed to the way of Just Peace, are called to be present in places where peace is endangered and to be God's ambassadors of reconciliation, to mediate in situations of conflict and to restore life and dignity to the victims of violence. The way of Just Peace takes its direction from the renunciation of violence which Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount and aims at challenging and breaking the cycle of

violence by transforming conflict and accepting the adversary or enemy as partner in the effort to re-establishing right relationships in community.

35 *The brief survey of the biblical tradition has pointed to the gift of law as God's primary means of reducing and limiting violence.* Indeed, in all cultures law is the central instrument for nonviolent resolution of conflict. Supporting and strengthening the "rule of law", therefore, has to be considered an essential ethical guideline for the Christian community. The concept of the "rule of law" refers to the framework of principles, institutions and procedures that are considered essential to protect persons and communities from arbitrary rule or violence and facilitate life in dignity. Respect for and implementation of human rights forms the basic criterion for enforcing the rule of law and establishing just and sustainable communities. In many cases the violation of human rights is linked with manifestations of direct or structural violence. Overcoming violence and defending human rights, therefore, constitute two sides of the same responsibility.

36 Addressing the challenges of nonviolence and reconciliation, the Harare Assembly of the WCC stated in 1998: "Violence arising from various forms of human rights violations, discrimination and structural injustice represents a growing concern at all levels of an increasingly plural society. Racism combines with and aggravates other causes of exclusion and marginalization. Conflicts are becoming increasingly complex, located more often within nations than between nations. Women and children in conflict situations represent a special concern. There is a need to bring together the work on gender and racism, human rights and transformation of conflict in ways that engage the churches in initiatives for reconciliation that build on repentance, truth, justice, reparation and forgiveness. The Council should work strategically with the churches on these issues to create a culture of nonviolence, linking and interacting with other international partners and organizations, and examining and developing appropriate approaches to conflict transformation and just peace-making in the new globalized context."[17] The statement concludes with the proclamation of the Ecumenical Decade to Overcome Violence 2001-2010.

37 The "rule of law" presupposes an order of the community which strictly limits the use of force to cases where the legitimate authority and its agents are constrained to protect life and security of individuals or the community as a whole. Any such use of force stands itself under the rule of law and the demand for respecting human rights and those responsible have to be held accountable for their actions. Advocacy against the impunity of illegitimate use of force and the violation of human rights must be considered as an essential means of furthering Just Peace.

38 *Responding to violence in the spirit of Just Peace aims at building and strengthening just relationships in the community through prevention of violence, transformation of conflict, and healing through restorative justice and reconciliation.* Prevention of acts of violence, whether in interpersonal relationships or within and between communities is not only the responsibility of the agents of public order, but it is shared by the churches and religious communities as bodies within civil society. An important element in this responsibility is *education for peace*, which is not simply about acquiring knowledge; it is about formation of character and building attitudes and habits to respond nonviolently in the face of provocation.

39 Peace education needs to be part of religious instruction in the churches at all levels. It should to begin with children, but must be extended to adolescents and adults as well. The formation to be agents of peace begins by looking to models of those already engaged in peacebuilding. For children, parents must be the first agents of peace they encounter, who serve as examples not only in what they say, but in what they do. As children grow and mature into being agents of peace themselves, the churches must provide space, encouragement, and active support in this formation. This obliges the churches and their members to discern whether their choices, their actions, and their lifestyles do or do not make them servants of peace. It also means giving support to those who have recognized gifts for promoting specific pathways of peace – for these are gifts of the Spirit of Peace within the churches and for the sake of the world. Some will have distinct capacities for accompanying victims of violence; others, for mediating in disputes; still others, for caring for the earth. Such gifts should be recognized as special ministries that the churches offer to the wider community. Through such efforts the churches can help to promote the formation of capacities within civil society for prevention of violence and transformation of conflicts.

40 Prevention of violence goes beyond peace education and forming agents of peace and reconciliation. *Basic to all efforts for preventing violence is the ceaseless work for justice in society and in the relations between communities.* The central criteria for justice are formulated by the standards of human rights, especially the social, economic and cultural rights. Their continuous and deliberate denial or infringement as a consequence of abuse of power or due to systemic causes constitutes the case of structural violence. Prevention under such conditions can take the form of prophetic advocacy and even active resistance. Churches and Christian communities must go beyond actions of caring for the victims, and be prepared to engage together with other civic organizations and movements in denouncing cases of structural violence and participate in

organized nonviolent resistance against such abuses of political or economic power.

41 *Not all conflicts around issues of social, political or economic justice involve structural violence.* Tracing the way of Just Peace does not aim at a condition of life in community without conflict. Conflicts of interest or of basic value orientation need to be engaged publicly rather than avoided or repressed. If such conflicts can be resolved through cooperation, argumentation and reasonable compromise rather than through confrontation with the winner "taking all", just relationships in the community will be strengthened. However, all conflicts, whether interpersonal or social, carry in them the potential of turning violent. In such situations, following the vision of Just Peace will take the form of *conflict transformation*. This involves acknowledging the legitimate interests of all sides involved and directing their attention to the common good of the community. Churches and religious communities are called to be particularly vigilant where the parties in social, political, or ethnic conflicts appeal to religious loyalties to give added legitimacy to and mobilize support for their strategies. Conflict transformation in such situations must expose the illegitimate use of religion for particular interests and point to the real causes of conflict; i.e. the opposing interests that require peaceful resolution through mediation, compromise or through a court of justice. Sometimes the responsibility of conflict transformation will have to begin by disturbing a false peace that covers up an entrenched conflict making the victims invisible. In that sense, prophetic advocacy can become an important way of preventing violence and furthering conflict transformation.

42 Prevention and conflict transformation receive particular significance with regard to the use of natural resources and the conflict between the need of securing the life of the human community and the imperative to safeguard the integrity of creation. This conflict has remained hidden and unacknowledged during centuries while nature was being treated as a resource to be exploited for human interest. Through a one-sided interpretation of the biblical tradition Christianity has contributed to the consolidation of an anthropocentric view of nature forgetting about the fundamental vulnerability of human life and its dependency on the viability of ecological balances. The threat of dramatic consequences of climate change now brings into the open the conflict between the model of society based on industrial-technological development and the requirements of ecological sustainability. Increasingly, indigenous peoples are challenging the world community to acknowledge the violence done to the earth and to return to a caring approach. They have opened ways for Christianity to re-appropriate the biblical understanding of the earth as God's creation and to be attentive to the "groaning of creation" (Rom. 8:19). Together with the growing community of victims of ecological crises, especially ecological refugees, they are calling the churches to become advocates of ecological justice and through serious changes of life-styles to further the transformation of this conflict with its high potential of violence.

43 The ultimate aim of preventing violence and transforming conflict is the *building of cultures of peace* in just and sustainable communities. The task of transformation reaches beyond preventing violence and reaching peaceful and cooperative settlements of conflict; it needs to confront the fact that the logic and dynamic of violence have become embodied in cultural patterns, in a "culture of violence." Resorting to violence has become more and more acceptable in order to establish ethnic or national identity, to gain social recognition or access to scarce resources. The process of globalization which tends to subject all aspects of life to the rules of a competitive market society has contributed to the shaping of this "culture of violence." The commitment of the ecumenical community, through the Decade to Overcome Violence, to cooperate in building a "culture of peace" aims at nothing less than a fundamental transformation of this cultural pattern.

44 In accepting this commitment it is important to underline again that Just Peace is not simply the final result of a deliberate strategy, an end state of affairs to be reached, but rather a continuous process, a way of life under the promise of God's peace revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Building and shaping a "culture of peace" will, therefore, manifest the same features of a dynamic, ongoing process. It will have to cultivate the capacity of openness to the other, the unexpected, the readiness constantly to transcend one's position and to redraw the boundaries of peace, to make it more and more inclusive. It will, therefore, struggle against all forms of ethnocentrism, xenophobia and ideologies that fuel enmity. The process must be rooted in the fundamental recognition that all life is created for and sustained in community. It thus points to a continuous task of moral and spiritual formation strengthening the capacity for mutual recognition and reciprocity. It will acknowledge human vulnerability and thus the need for basic security; but rather than building up defensive barriers, it seeks to transform vulnerability into a mark of true humanity: the acknowledgement of mutual dependence and responsibility for one another.

45 The cultural pattern oriented towards the vision of Just Peace will be marked by a strong commitment to truth and justice as vital dimensions for sustainable life in community. It will be very vigilant, however, not to succumb to the tendency of interpreting either justice or truth in a self-righteous manner which draws an absolute distinction between truth

The Christian community needs to develop particular vigilance with regard to aggressive forms of Christian fundamentalism and the use of biblical teaching to legitimate aggression against those of other faiths.

and error, right and wrong. True and just relationships in human community are constantly being undermined by the deeply rooted tendency to reduce the complexities of the human life-world to choices between either/or, between winning and losing, or to declare that "there is no alternative." The moral and spiritual formation for a "culture of peace" will seek to recover the fundamental relationship between truth and trust, between justice and righteousness, and to learn that offering forgiveness is the way to restore right and just relationships in community.

46 The effort of building a culture of peace will have to struggle constantly with the manifestations of fear and anxiety which often enough distort the perception of reality and thus nurture conflict or even violence. Whereas the culture of violence depends on creating victims who submit to this role, the cultural transformation towards a culture of peace starts with the refusal to accept the role of the victim. This does not mean to close one's eyes to real threats or to one's own fragility and vulnerability, but it restores them to their true proportions and thus involves an act of spiritual discernment which breaks through the distorted perceptions of reality.

47 The need for a new ethical discourse and for critical discernment is felt particularly in situations of *armed, violent conflict*. With regard to political responsibilities, it has become customary to distinguish between pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict situations. They correspond to the previous proposal to consider the specific ethical demands of prevention, transformation and building or restoring a culture of peace. In *pre-conflict situations* attention must be focussed on preventing a violent turn of conflict and on education for peace, including the building of capacities for early warning and defusing initial inclinations for violent action. Violent conflict can be prevented if attention is drawn in a timely and consistent fashion to oppressive and unjust structures and practices that build the resentment which then leads to violent confrontation. In that process rumour control and dampening inflammatory rhetoric in the media and on the streets are of crucial importance. The Christian community needs to develop particular vigilance with regard to aggressive forms of Christian fundamentalism and the use of biblical teachings to legitimate aggression against those of other faiths.

48 When people find themselves in the *midst of violent conflict* itself, peace-building has two aspects: protection and mediation. The *responsibility to protect* those directly endangered by conflict is beginning to receive greater attention today than in the past. Women in conflict situations have known about this responsibility for a long time, since it usually falls to them to protect the young, the aged, and the ill; at the same time they, together with their children, are most in need of protection. Churches need to explore how networks of congregations can become havens of protection not only from armed or urban violence, but also from domestic and especially sexual violence.

49 Beyond offering support to those most vulnerable, protection must also include vigorous advocacy for the rule of law and the respect of human rights. Since several years the "Responsibility to Protect" is being considered as a new norm governing international relations. This norm underlines that the responsibility to protect a population from violence and abuse of human rights and to provide for "human security", is an integral part of the claim to sovereignty of the respective government. In extreme situations, where governments are unable or unwilling to assume this task, the responsibility would fall to the international community and would provide legitimacy to actions of intervention, eventually by using armed force, to protect the endangered population in a situation of armed conflict. The ethical and political implications of such a norm have been controversially discussed within the ecumenical movement (cf. the statement by the WCC Assembly at Porto Alegre 2006: "Vulnerable Populations at Risk. Statement on the Responsibility to Protect"). In line with the "Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace" it is concluded here that the use of force in situations of conflict is likely to prevent or delay the transformation of conflict and thus becomes an obstacle on the way to Just Peace.

50 *Mediation* in situations of armed conflict is an important and often delicate task that can fall to the churches and their leaders. It can take place at various levels. At the grassroots levels local leaders, both lay and ordained, are called upon to interpret the insights and perceptions of their congregations to those involved in the mediation process. Regional and national leadership of churches may be called upon to serve in mediating roles, especially in settings where Christians are in the majority or where effective interfaith councils are in place. Here, respect for the spiritual and moral integrity of the churches, represented by their leadership, can be a significant factor in ending conflict. Engaging in mediation is often delicate, keeping a balance between gaining and maintaining the trust of the parties on the one hand, and maintaining the degree of neutrality that makes mediation possible on the other. Especially in civil conflicts, when all other social institutions have been discredited or destroyed, churches

may be called upon as the sole surviving institution with enough credibility to be able to speak on behalf of the people.

51 Apart from the responses of protection and mediation, *the most difficult ethical challenge facing the Christian community when confronted with the reality of war or armed, military conflict arises with the question whether war can (still) be considered an "act of justice."* The first assembly of the WCC at Amsterdam, under the impact of the devastations caused by World War II, had in fact rejected war as a means of settling disputes, because "war is contrary to the will of God" and "incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ." While this basic conviction has been reconfirmed and even strengthened in the period since then, the ethical implications continue to be discussed controversially. In a later section the two principal Christian Peace traditions and the search for a common pathway will be presented and analyzed. However, the vision of Just Peace as suggested here reaches beyond the effort of reconciling the tension between "pacifism" and the theory of "just war." It stands for a fundamental shift of paradigm and a transformed ethical discourse that does not start from war in order to move to peace, but focuses attention on the praxis of nonviolent, peaceful resolution of conflict. In their commitment to the vision of Just Peace Christians and churches must, therefore, face "the challenge to give up any theological or other justification of the use of military power and to become a *koinonia* dedicated to the pursuit of a just peace."[18]

52 In *post-conflict* situations the churches face particular challenges and responsibilities. They are especially challenged as significant actors in civil society to promote truth-telling and to further the restoration of justice and respect for human rights. As signs and instruments of God's peace they further need to nurture the willingness to forgive and serve as agents of reconciliation.

53 Getting at the *truth* about what happened during the conflict and what were its causes is often an important step in the building of peace after overt conflict. The churches have been called upon in a number of instances in recent years to take leadership roles in truth-telling processes. Truth-telling is important in the rehabilitation of those who had been deemed enemies by a powerful state, but especially in allowing victims (or their surviving families) to tell their stories and witness to the pain and loss they have endured. Truth-telling can be an important part of establishing a new regime of accountability and transparency where previously oppressive ideologies, arbitrariness and secrecy have prevailed. Truth-telling is a many-sided and delicate process that, in deeply wounded societies, may not always be possible or even advisable. But without truth (not just in the sense of veracity, but also in the biblical sense of trustworthiness and reliability), a new society cannot build on a firm foundation. Churches cannot credibly accompany truth-telling processes unless they are ready to acknowledge the truth about themselves and their implication in the conflict.

54 Next to allowing the truth to be known and acknowledged, the most urgent need in post-conflict situations is to re-establish confidence that *justice* will prevail and that the human rights of all members of the community are respected. Those who carry responsibility for acts of violence have to be made accountable and the structures of injustice which generated the conflict have to be transformed. The experience of churches in recent post-conflict situations has given particular significance to the *search for restorative justice*. The main aim of restorative justice is the re-integration of the community. It focuses on people rather than on general norms of justice. Its objective is to restore the dignity of the victims of the conflict, but at the same time to bring those who have caused the break-up of relationships to acknowledge their responsibility towards the community and to prepare the way for their re-integration. While punitive justice is the prerogative of the courts of law, restorative justice is the concern of the entire community; the churches together with other religious and civic groupings can contribute significantly to this process and thus further the healing of the community.

JUST PEACE AS A SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

55 *For the Christian community the approach of restorative justice implies the spiritual challenge to create the space for forgiveness and ultimately for reconciliation.* To promote *forgiveness* does not mean to avoid facing the truth or allowing justice to prevail. Rather, through forgiveness both the victims and their offenders are to be liberated from the burden of the past and painful memories can be healed. Forgiveness is a voluntary act that can neither be demanded or organized nor made dependent on a prior act of repentance. In fact, forgiveness can open the way to true repentance and reparation as is shown in the encounters of Jesus. Forgiveness is an expression of the spiritual courage that is rooted in the assurance of God's generosity and forgiveness of human sins and wrongdoings (Matt. 18:21ff.). Churches can create the space where victims and perpetrators can begin to trust the power of forgiveness; those involved in acts of violence also need to be liberated to forgive themselves. Without forgiveness, there is no way of coming free from the past. Christian forgiveness is not cheap forgiveness, but a change of heart and an active concern for the

welfare of the offender. Forgiving and being forgiven can release from the heavy burdens of anger, hatred, guilt and fear and thus re-establish community.

56 Forgiveness does not erase the past but remembers the past in a different way. Promoting forgiveness, accompanying people on the long road to forgiveness, and providing a public ritual framework where especially social forgiveness can be enacted are all things that fall especially to the churches. To the extent the churches can live up to the praxis of Jesus, they can be effective instruments of God's forgiveness.

57 Along the path to forgiveness, the healing of memories is of special significance. The healing of memories aims at being able to re-appropriate the past together in ways that will make forgiveness especially possible. Here the accompaniment of victims by the churches, of finding a way through their suffering by looking to the cross and resurrection of Christ, is one of the most important ways of serving the divine purpose of reconciling the whole creation.

58 While forgiveness finds expression in the act of saying: "I forgive you," *reconciliation* is both a process and a goal. The process is likely to entail exercises of truth-telling, the pursuit of justice, the healing of memories, and the extending of forgiveness. Reconciliation between individual persons focuses upon restoring the dignity of the one who has been offended and the mutual acceptance of responsibility for one another as members of the community. Social reconciliation may focus upon healing the memories or building a common future together: it may involve making sure that the deeds of the past cannot happen again, or building an alternate future. Through the process of reconciliation the community can overcome the trauma caused by the eruption of violence in its midst and reach out to the perpetrators, seeking to draw them back into the community, so that they can offer reparation and contribute again to the common life. Whenever reconciliation is achieved, the experience of it as a gift of free grace from God can be the most moving and effective way of speaking about God's design for the world, of how the world is being drawn back into God, its Creator.

59 Practising forgiveness and engaging in processes of reconciliation, together with active, life-affirming nonviolence, are basic marks of the way of Just Peace. Peace-making is not simply assenting to a set of ideas about God's design for the world. To be agents of God's peace requires putting on the mind that was in Christ Jesus (cf. Phil 2:5): the emptying of self, embracing of vulnerability, seeking the fellowship of the excluded, thus responding to the call of costly discipleship. It requires being led by the Holy Spirit in the healing and sanctifying of the world. In order to have that mind of Christ, peace-building requires entering regularly and deeply into communion with the Triune God, along the ways that Christ has set out for us. It is that presence in God that makes it possible for us to come to discern God's working in our world. It allows us to see those glimmerings of grace that may come to flash forth the love of God that heals and reconciles.

60 Putting on the mind of Christ, being formed in Christ, involves spiritual practices and disciplines that embody peace in our own bodies:

- communal acts of worship in order to be nourished by God's Word and by the Eucharist;
- making prayers of intercession as part of our mindfulness of being formed in Christ;
- seeking and extending forgiveness, so as to create truthfulness in ourselves and to forge the space for others who need to seek repentance;
- washing one another's feet, so as to learn the ways of service;
- engaging in times of fasting, to review our patterns of consumption and relationships to one another and to the earth;
- consistent and sustained acts of caring for others, especially those most in need of healing, liberation, and reconciliation;
- consistent and sustained acts of caring for the earth.

61 On the way of just peace, we are invited to sustain hope (Rom. 5:1ff; 8:18f; 1 Peter 1:3ff.). Building peace is often an arduous task, marked by disappointments, failures and setbacks. How do we find the reserves of strength to remain faithful and to keep forging on in the midst of adversity? Hope is not the same as optimism. Optimism is our assessment of how we can change the present and forge the future by dint of our own resources and strengths. Hope, on the other hand, is something that comes from God, who is the author of peace and reconciliation. Hope is something that we discover, drawing us forward into the mystery of peace. It manifests itself at times in unexpected places and in surprising ways. It can be perceived thanks to our communion with God – glimmerings of grace in the midst of adversity, acts of kindness in the face of ruthless self-seeking, moments of gentleness in the hardness of relentless aggression.

62 A spirituality is something that agents of peace share, a web of practices and attitudes that bind a community together. In its own finite way, spirituality mirrors the loving relationships between the persons of the triune God who sustains, transforms and sanctifies a broken world.

People around the world look with eager longing for Christians to become who they are.

3. CONTEXTS OF JUST PEACE

1 The two previous chapters have introduced the vision of Just Peace and have tried to provide signposts for the journey. These signposts are intended to help in discerning the different faces of violence and to trace the way of Just Peace in the midst of the reality of violence guided by clear ethical criteria. Chapter 2 discussed in particular the different ways of responding to violence in the spirit of Just Peace which aim at "building and strengthening just relationships in the community through prevention of violence, transformation of conflict, and healing through restorative justice and reconciliation." Obviously, the way of Just Peace will take on very different shapes and directions depending on particular theological and spiritual traditions, the nature of the conflicts and the specific challenges of violence which threaten the life of a given community. These contextual differences must be taken very seriously in discerning the appropriate response. At the same time, the churches seek to fulfil their common calling to be peace-makers and to maintain ecumenical links of solidarity on the way of Just Peace.

2 *The Ecumenical Call to Just Peace* (ECJP) has pointed to four

general contexts where the search for Just Peace is at stake, that is, peace in the *community*, peace with the *earth*, peace in the *marketplace*, and peace among the peoples. They served as a framework for the programme of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC) in Kingston, Jamaica, May 2011. The global challenges and main directions indicated under each of these four headings in the final section of the *ECJP* have been reconfirmed during the IEPC and serve to guide the churches in their common witness for peace with justice.

3 Yet the encounters and exchanges during the IEPC have also brought to the surface that in each of the four contextual clusters, as well as in their interrelationship, stand a number of underlying theological issues and critical concerns that have to be addressed and clarified if the ecumenical community is to reach a "new ecumenical consensus on justice and peace" at the forthcoming Tenth Assembly of the WCC at Busan, South Korea, in October 2013. This chapter, therefore, is meant to translate the concluding section of the *ECJP* into an agenda for further work in the churches and the World Council of Churches as they together prepare for this assembly. Some examples of good practice will be given in chapter 5.

4 The chapter is based on discussions during the IEPC. Each of the four clusters points first to a selection of specific situations where the issues at stake are clearly visible. It then tries to discern the underlying theological ethical concerns that call for further clarification. And finally it raises questions regarding the consequences for the life and self-understanding of the churches. On none of these points were discussions during the IEPC conclusive and the reflections of this chapter, therefore, do not pretend to offer final affirmations. They are rather meant to stimulate further discussion.

FOR PEACE IN THE COMMUNITY

Looking at different situations

5 Our world is fractured in many ways and violence seems to be everywhere. Under the veil of this seemingly ordinary violence, life in community is severely threatened. Women and men at the IEPC offered testimony about the real and hidden conflicts, divisions and deep rifts marking communities and interpersonal relationships. It is a painful discovery to realize that these are not only deeply encrusted in the fabric of our societies, but that they are also mirrored in the life of church communities.

6 The IEPC sharpened our awareness that we need to be more sensitive to the many stories of individuals and groups which recount the experiences of de-humanization, the devaluation of human life as a commodity – treating human beings as "resource material" and "objects of desire" (see chapter 2, par. 33) – and the many realities of denial, destruction and death.

7 Many stories heard during the IEPC made visible that violence and injustice are recurrent experiences. Women in the *Democratic Republic of Congo* continue to be victims of systematic rape by soldiers and rebels, which causes not only physical harm, but also long-term psychological disorders and social disintegration as a consequence of stigmatization and exclusion of these women by their families. One of the women declared that it was more likely in the DRC for a girl to be raped during her lifetime than for her to learn to read and write. This was a vivid and distressing illustration of the pervasiveness of these atrocities.

8 Other testimonies referred to sexual abuse of disabled women in *Korea* (the "hidden sisters") and to the public manifestation of violence against women in *India*, especially Dalits. Their discrimination becomes tangible when listening to the cries of thousands of voices in the communities lamenting the experience of humiliation, harassment and public rape which are embedded in a system of societal stigmatization. All these examples show that recurrent violence against women constitutes a cross-cultural experience. Women and girls are the most vulnerable part of the population.

9 Special attention was given to the presence of discrimination in *Israel/Palestine*. This situation shows the complexity of experiences of injustice and violence in communities. Palestinian people, on the one hand, struggle for their autonomy and the end of an oppressive occupation. On the other hand, the prevalent patriarchal system with its self-sufficiency and insistence on honour codes reinforces the status quo with regard to women's aspiration for self-determination and freedom. In this context the wall becomes at the same time the symbolic representation of the community's division and a location of risk. The volatile region of Israel/Palestine also shows how religion can be misused to legitimize violence, and that clashes occur not necessarily between civilizations, but rather within communities.

10 The civil rights movement in the *USA* with its emphasis on nonviolent resistance against the triple nexus of poverty, racism and militarism, and *Jamaica's* experience of inherited and perpetuated social fragmentation because of the many layers of particular identities and belongings which divide the island and jeopardize the communal cohesion, complement the

Violence is the result of sinful, intentional failure to be responsive to the demands of living in community.

picture that violence challenges lives in communities as a whole.

11 These narrations of pain, anger and grievance enable people within and outside the respective contexts to recognize the victims of violence, to name their suffering and to identify possible avenues of furthering the restoration of their dignity as well as healing the broken human community. Such initiatives may then lead to narrations of hope, which were also heard at the IEPC. Through them a glimpse of peace becomes visible: in the efforts of men and women to overcome the divisions, stereotypes, scapegoat-mechanisms, the degradation of human life and to confront the barriers that separate people from each other even within one and the same community.

12 It has been particularly encouraging to hear that networks of solidarity and alliances of common action have been set up by engaged people in various communities and across diverse regions in the global North and South, as well as in an increasing number of partnerships between initiatives in different contexts of the global South, in order to develop alternatives and to put them in practice. When, for example, Congolese and South Korean disabled women discover commonalities in their sexual exploitation and systems of oppression, they not only gain public attention and raise awareness, but they also escape the victimization which keeps them passive, reducing their potential for resistance and transformation of the prevalent dehumanizing structures.

Discerning theological and ethical issues

13 The crucial and undoubtedly difficult task ahead will be to unveil, analyze and deconstruct deeply rooted ideologies and the creation of images of the other which serve to maintain the status quo of oppression and violence, as well as uncover the misinterpretations and the misuse of religious sources that legitimize particular political claims and interests. This critical introspection (see chapter 2, par. 22) is a genuine part of the prophetic mandate of the churches,and is a precondition for a genuine and honest encounter and dialogue with people of other faiths about peacemaking across borders and diverse identities.

14 Churches and individual Christians can offer their perspective on peacebuilding, which is based on participation in God's mission of peace and reconciliation. It confronts all manifestations of injustice and denounces violence against and suffering of victims. This mission is characterized by the emphasis on God's initiative of reconciliation, because God has reconciled us with him through Christ (2 Cor. 5:18). It is based on trust in the announcement of reconciled relationships between formerly estranged people in the community (Eph. 2:11ff.) and proclaims in faith that through Christ "God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. 1: 20).

15 Another basic theological issue concerns the question how violence relates to the central affirmation that human beings were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26f.). The biblical story interprets human life in terms of fundamental relationships: the relationship with God and at the same time the complementary relationship between male and female. Since what it means to be human emerges only in relationships – the relation with God, with other people and with the world of God's creation – violence is the result of sinful, intentional failure to be responsive to the demands of living in community (see chapter 2, par. 27).

16 Recognizing the reality of violence, the vision of Just Peace must be continuously centered on the life and ministry of Jesus: "The way of Just Peace takes its direction from the renunciation of violence which Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount and aims at challenging and breaking the cycle of violence by transforming conflict and accepting the adversary or enemy as partner in the effort to re-establishing right relationships in community." (See chapter 2, par. 34)

17 In this perspective the encounter with the other becomes the constitutional element of constructing humanity around an ethic of solidarity and empathy. Churches that accept their vulnerability become themselves suffering servants in the communities and believe that the transformative power of God's mission of peace will serve as a credible model for the wider community.

Consequences for the churches

18 Narrating our pains and exposing our wounds to each other remains the only possibility for sharing the experience of the other. Only if these stories are listened to and shared in mutual accountability will the ecumenical movement be able to take on genuine commitment for Just Peace. However, peace will not be achieved easily. There is a costliness in peacemaking, which demands a complete and existential engagement of the whole human being in relation with God, fellow humans and the creation.

19 In the final message of the IEPC reference was made to the churches' responsibility to contribute to a discernment process in which people can identify viable alternatives to violence: "Churches must help in identi-

fying the everyday choices that can end abuse and promote human rights, gender justice, climate justice, economic justice, unity and peace."

20 Churches experience painfully that this task of moral and ethical discernment is often accompanied by high levels of controversy and division. A particular difficulty arises from the fact that, on the one hand, churches are often called upon to offer spaces for dialogue between hostile groups in transitional societies, as was the case with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. On the other hand, they are in need themselves of the availability of safe spaces in order to be able to address dividing issues in their own life.

21 Churches have to be particularly mindful of the danger of restricting their understanding of peacebuilding to specific actions rather than comprehending it as a process that implies an ongoing moral and spiritual struggle (see chapter 2, par. 23). The churches will continuously have to recall that peace is a precious gift of God which must not be turned into a strategic goal that is reached once and for all.

22 Peacebuilding is an act of discipleship, accepting the great commandment to love not only one's neighbour, but also the enemy, being ready to offer space to the other while recognizing one's own brokenness and vulnerability. Being the church in situations of recurrent violent conflicts and atrocities, therefore, means to be responsive to the faces and stories of the people and to re-create and transform communities into living symbols of discernment, practice and spirituality of peace.

FOR PEACE WITH THE EARTH

Looking at different situations

23 Among the global challenges to peace with the earth lifted up in paragraph 30 in the *ECJP*, climate change as a consequence of human lifestyles stands out with particular urgency because of its global implications. During the IEPC the impact of climate change was made very vivid with regard to the uncertain future of the island state of Tuvalu in the South Pacific. The cohesion of the community and its traditional lifestyle connected with the sea and the land are seriously threatened by the erosion of the coast line due to bleaching of the coral reefs, prolonged periods of drought, unpredictable weather patterns with increasing intensity of storms, loss of fish and – most importantly – rising sea levels that in the foreseeable future might lead to the disappearance of the islands. Tuvalu here is taken as an example for the condition of many island states as well as low-lying coastal regions, for example, in Bangladesh.

24 To the impact of climate change has to be added the challenge of the introduction of the market-based economy which leads to a consumerist life- style on the one hand and to food insecurity and an increase in poverty on the other. While climate change as a consequence of the carbon- based pattern of industrial development, especially in the countries of the West, clearly demonstrate the disturbance of the life-sustaining natural cycles, the example of Tuvalu also makes visible the close linkage between the search for climate justice and the struggle against the unjust economic system of the globalized market economy. In addition, the example of Tuvalu brings to light the political dimension of Just Peace: the potential relocation of the people of Tuvalu raises the issue of the exercise of sovereignty and the rights of people who might be deprived of their existence as a community. But not only is the continued existence of Tuvalu at stake: unmitigated climate change poses a global threat to peace with the earth and might make large parts of it uninhabitable.

25 Other contextual examples of situations where peace with the earth is at stake include the experience of indigenous people who are deprived of their land rights in the name of "development." The IEPC has heard reports about cases of "land grabbing" by agro-industrial transnational companies for purposes of bio-fuel production or by mining conglomerates in Bolivia, Canada, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, and Tanzania. This will have serious consequences for food security. The struggle for land rights is intimately linked with the right to water, for example, in the case of the Palestinian communities or of indigenous communities in Columbia, who struggle against the increasing trend toward privatization and political monopolization of access to water resources. Water and land form the basis of the life-sustaining relationship between humanity and nature. Peace with the earth points to the quality of relationships between humanity and its natural habitat. Water justice, in the sense of an equitable and sustainable pattern of access, extraction, distribution and use of water resources, is an indispensable dimension of peace with the earth. It is predicted that future armed conflicts will be fought around access to and the distribution of water resources.

Discerning theological and ethical issues

26 Climate justice and water justice together constitute the core of the concept of eco-justice or earth justice, which stands for the need to expose and heal the fundamental disturbance of the relationship between humanity and its natural habitat with a view to enter anew into peace with creation. For the longest part of history humans have felt threatened by the forces of nature. Today humanity finds itself in a position where it

has the capacity to disrupt irreversibly the conditions of life on earth and thus of all prospects of Just Peace.

27 The call to strive for eco-justice and to develop a caring attitude and relationship with the earth as God's creation must start first with an acknowledgment of the violent character of humanity's relationship with the earth that is part of modernity. As stated in chapter 2, this violence "expresses itself in the irresponsible disregard for and intrusion into the delicate ecological balances in the natural world through reckless exploitation of common goods such as drinking water and fossil fuels, the felling of forests, the over-fishing of the seas and oceans, the extinction of species. Some of these forms of violence have become 'habitual.' This refers to abuses of human power which have become tacitly accepted, such as a thoughtless consumerist life-style, taking gifts of nature for granted…. This expression of violence has been hidden for too long and is only gradually being acknowledged asthe destructive consequences of human action become manifest, e.g., in the dramatic implications of climate change"(see above chapter 2, para. 33).

28 The conflict between the need to secure the life of the human community and the imperative of safeguarding the integrity of creation remained unacknowledged as long as nature was regarded as a resource to be exploited for human interest. This attitude has been legitimated consciously or tacitly by a one-sided interpretation of the biblical account of creation entrusting the earth to human domination and thus introducing an anthropocentric view of nature (see above chapter 2, para. 42). The dramatic consequences of climate have now brought this conflict out into the open and call for effective steps of conflict transformation which imply not only a fundamental change of lifestyle but also a critical reassessment of the secular, scientific-technological approach to nature.

29 The encounter with indigenous approaches of respect, reverence and care for the natural habitat rooted in a spirituality that acknowledges the earth as "mother" and as sacred challenge the Christian community to critically review its understanding of the relationship between God, nature and humanity and to expose it to the encounter with the traditions of other religious communities. By affirming the earth and all that is in it as God's good creation, the Christian faith maintains a critical difference between God, the Divine and the earth. The earth belongs to God, it is God's "handiwork," but is itself not sacred or divine. The confession of God as the Holy Trinity includes the affirmation that God loves and cares for creation, that in the incarnation of the Word of God creation has been sanctified and that through the life-giving Spirit God continues to be actively present in creation. How can this understanding of the relationship between the earth as God's creation and God who created it "out of nothing" be enriched by the encounter with other religious traditions that regard the earth as "mother" or as the "body of God," or with spiritualities that emphasize the reverence for the elements of earth, water, fire, air and the attitude of compassion for all living beings? How can the Christian tradition learn to embrace God as the source of power sustaining the web of life and appropriate a spirituality of communicating with creation?

30 A critical review is equally necessary with regard to the relationship between humanity and the earth as God's creation. The biblical tradition on the one hand clearly places the human being into the whole. of creation: humans are "earthlings": "Made from dust and earth, they share in the vulnerability and mortality of all living things" (see above chapter 2, para. 15). But at the same time, in exercising the power to name the animals (Gen. 2: 20) and as the only creature that has been created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27), humans are set apart from and over against the rest of creation as God's partners in caring for creation, as the "priests of creation." How can the implicit anthropocentrism of this tradition be opened up in the direction of a life-centered approach of caring for creation?

31 This question receives its sharpest spiritual profile when considering the long-term consequences of unmitigated climate change. In the covenant with Noah after the great flood God promised to Noah, his descendents and all living creatures on earth that "the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh" (Gen. 9:15). And God established the rainbow as the sign "of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth" (Gen. 9:17). However, this covenant places on humanity as God's partner the obligation to care for creation. By breaking this covenant humanity becomes responsible for bringing back chaos upon the earth. While God remains faithful to the covenant, climate change is the consequence of human failure to assume the responsibility of caring for creation. Peace with the earth is first of all a call to repentance and to renewed acceptance of humanity's rightful and responsible place in maintaining the integrity of creation.[1]

32 But how should those who will be the primary victims of the effects of climate change interpret their fate in the light of God's providence? How can they be helped to overcome their victim status and actively resist the forces of fear and resignation? What are the spiritual sources of hope that the Christian faith can offer to them and to all those who are concerned that the time for *metanoia* may have run out? As Christians we confess that God's act of redemption in Christ concerns the whole of

creation and not simply the human part of it. Do we trust the promise that in Christ there already is a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17)? How can the prophetic vision of the messianic reign of justice and its consequences for the restoration of peace in the earth (Is. 11:1-9) and the vision of St. Paul that "creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21) be re-appropriated to become a source of hope that inspires action?

33 Repentance for the violent human disregard for the integrity of creation is not just a spiritual obligation. It must find expression in deliberate acts of transforming the conflict between the requirements of human sustenance and respecting the web of life in creation. On the most elementary level this means instituting rules for sharing natural resources and common goods, such as water and land, in a just and sustainable manner. Since climate change is the result of the dramatic increase in the emission of greenhouse gases, and especially of CO2 as a consequence of burning fossil fuels for energy needs, urgent measures are required for reducing the carbon footprint of humanity through energy conservation and the shift to regenerative sources of energy. The dramatic accident in the nuclear power plant at Fukushima has demonstrated that this high-risk technology implies incalculable dangers for sustainable life on earth. Furthermore, the industrialized countries have accumulated over many generations an ecological debt which has to be taken into account in determining the modalities of CO2 reduction and the adaptation mechanisms in the less developed countries.

Consequences for the churches

34 It has been argued that the traditional anthropocentric interpretation of the biblical account of creation has been the primary cause for the violent and exploitative relationship with nature as it has developed in the modern era. Even though this interpretation has been refuted convincingly on biblical grounds and the influence of the Enlightenment on the development f scientific attitudes of technological mastery over nature must be considered as the more decisive factor, there is no doubt that the majority of Christian churches have adapted their theology and spirituality to a modern view of nature and its exploitative use for the benefit of humanity. For too long Christian teaching has looked at the human person as the "crown of creation gifted by God with the capacity to control and rule over the forces of nature. This anthropocentric view correlates with an understanding of God and God's relationship with creation centered on God's ruling power rather than on God's loving care and life-sustaining presence in creation. Accepting the call to work for restoring peace with creation implies for the churches to re-assess self-critically their traditions of teaching and spirituality regarding the relationship between God, humanity and the earth. This task has begun to receive increased attention in ecumenical discussion but the present challenges of climate justice and earth justice make this re-assessment all the more urgent.

35 This process has received strong support and spiritual encouragement through the initiatives of the Ecumenical Patriarchs Dimitrios and Bartholomew I. Since 1989 the Phanar has dedicated September 1 of each year (the beginning of the Orthodox liturgical year) to the concern of the environment. The Patriarchal messages on this occasion have become an ongoing exercise of pastoral teaching and exhortation about the moral and spiritual challenges of ecological issues. Since 1992 the Patriarchate has held a number of symposia on "Religion, Science and the Environment," focusing on major water systems (Aegean sea, Black sea, Danube, Adriatic sea, Baltic sea, Amazon, the Arctic sea, the Mississippi river, and the Nile delta), their pollution and their significance for climate change. Also since 1992 summer seminars on ecology have been organized at the island of Halki. The WCC and the Conference of European Churches followed up on the initiative of the Ecumenical Patriarch. The Third European Ecumenical Assembly at Sibiu in 2007 suggested that the churches set aside the period from September1 to October 4 as a "Time for Creation" in order to provide a spiritual space for entering into a new relationship with creation.

36 Churches are significant factors in the networks of civil society. They can encourage and motivate for the necessary changes of life-styles among their members and in local communities. The IEPC heard reports about the programme of the Church of Scotland regarding the formation of "eco-congregations" and the shaping of "eco-churches." The Church of Finland also launched an official programme responding to the challenges of climate change. The message introducing the programme is based on the trinitarian understanding of God as Creator, Saviour and Sanctifier; it confesses God as the source of the power of love sustaining the web of relationships within creation. The message with the title "Gratitude, Respect and Moderation" seeks to encourage in the Christian community an attitude of gratitude for the web of life and for moderation and sufficiency in the use of natural resources.

37 Apart from providing practical and spiritual support for the change of lifestyles, for example, with regard to the use of energy especially from fossil fuels, the churches should engage in advocacy with governments and inter-governmental agencies to urge the translation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change into binding rules and commitments.

On behalf of the WCC a small ecumenical team has been present at all negotiating sessions of the Conference of Parties of the FCCC since 1992

FOR PEACE IN THE MARKETPLACE

Looking at different situations

38 The evidence of a fundamental disorder in the global economic and financial markets has been presented and analysed extensively in the AGAPE-Process of the WCC, which aimed at exploring an "alternative globalization addressing people and earth." The financial and economic crises since 2008 have provided ample confirmation of this critical analysis which has been presented and discussed during the IEPC in several workshops, especially those organized by Kairos Europa, Peace for Life, the Council for World Mission, OIKOTREE and Kairos Palestine. They have sought to name clearly the neo-liberal system of global domination which is at the root of the structural violence in the global economic and financial markets.

39 This analysis has further brought to light the strong link between the issues of economic and ecological justice. With its statement on "ecological debt," the Central Committee of the WCC has recently challenged its member churches, especially those in Europe and North America, to engage in self-critical reflection and action on debt, conversion, reconciliation and reparation in order to restore ecological justice in the global community. The issues are at the center of the WCC programme on "Poverty, Wealth and Ecology." The poor are the primary victims of ecological destruction and among them women and children, indigenous people and ethnic minorities bear the brunt. Examples given during the IEPC include the gold mining industry in Tanzania and its impact on the social fabric and the ecological conditions of the affected communities, as well as the struggle of local indigenous communities in India against the social and ecological impact of the production of the Coca Cola Company. These examples clearly demonstrate that the struggles for socio-economic and ecological justice have to be integrated and seen as mutually interdependent.

40 The question was asked during the IEPC whether markets can ever be considered as a space for peace or whether they must rather be regarded as manifestations of structural violence. The question is legitimate. Markets today are the dominating framework for the interplay between production, reproduction, distribution and consumption. In principle all persons should have an equitable share in each of these functions of the market. In reality, however, slaves, workers and peasants are normally assigned the role of production; women are reduced to reproduction; politicians and property owners or managers oversee distribution; and consumption of the goods produced is dependent on the availability of the means to buy them. Markets, therefore, operate according to several mechanisms of exclusion. For their beneficiaries markets offer a space for freedom of action, affirmation of their rights, satisfaction of their needs and desires, and thus also a false sense of peace. But from the perspective of those who are excluded, this is a false peace that is under the exclusive control of the powerful.

41 Markets operate according to the principle of competition, that is, the struggle to gain the upper hand and to maximize profit. They are energized by a culture of consumerism which knows no limits to human desires and thus becomes an expression of structural greed. Continuous economic growth has become the primary criterion for assessing the functioning of markets. To bring peace into the marketplace would call for a fundamental transformation of the interplay among production, reproduction, distribution, consumption, recycling and reuse; for introducing strict regulations, fighting speculation and corruption and making human security and the observance of human rights, especially the economic, social and cultural rights, a fundamental requirement for the functioning of market processes. It would thus also call for recognizing the limitations of role of the market as the dominant mechanism to guarantee the reliable production and just distribution of the goods which are necessary for the sustenance of life. However, the efforts of transformation toward a more just and sustainable economy meet with strong resistance, because the theory and practice of the global market do not allow any alternatives. In any case, the market economy and its dominant traits cannot be expected to contribute to the way of Just Peace. Certain initiatives offer some hope, including the rise of fair trade, the growth of socially, morally and environmentally responsible investment, and pioneering work at the UN to link human rights law and business practices. In general, however, the message and witness of Just Peace will be a challenge to the defenders of the structures of the global market.

Discerning theological and ethical issues

42 Any effort of the churches to promote the way of Just Peace under the conditions of structural violence that is manifest in the market context has to begin with acknowledging the fact that they, like any other organized community in society, are conditioned by and dependent on the functioning of the market economy. This is the framework within which

they have to secure their financial resources or take decisions about investing pension fund capital. The churches through the missionary enterprise have contributed to the long-term process of globalization. They are part of societies that tend to acquiesce in the structural violence of the global system through passive acceptance of poverty, trade-disparities, and inequality between nations and classes. They have hardly resisted the exploitative character of the accumulation of wealth and today are tolerating the propagation of the "gospel of prosperity" which, at least implicitly, provides religious sanctioning for greed. What is true for the churches can be said more broadly of members of the Christian community: as captives of the consumerist culture they are in their majority ambivalent regarding the question of peace in the marketplace and ill-equipped to resist the dominance of the market forces.

43 But the churches and members of the Christian community are called to be witnesses for the gospel message that promises "abundant life for all" and proclaims justice and peace as the central values of God's coming reign. In his inaugural sermon in Nazareth Jesus, drawing on a passage from the book of the prophet Isaiah, proclaimed "the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:19). In affirming the fulfilment of this prophecy he announced the coming of God's reign as the great "jubilee." The jubilee ordinances in the book of Leviticus (Lev. 25) describe the essential elements of the social order of God's covenant people. The jubilee was meant to break the cycle of domination and dependency by proclaiming reconciliation and liberation and by ordering a self-limitation in the exercise of power. Those who control the basic factors of economic life – land, labour and capital – are to limit and even relinquish their exercise of power, thus restoring to the deprived and excluded the basis of and the space for a life in dignity. They are to practice the same generosity and justice that God manifests according to Jesus' parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1-16). God's justice contradicts the expectation of rightful merit in a competitive economic system. God generously grants to all "whatever is right" (Matt. 20:4) in order to sustain their life and acknowledge their dignity. God's justice seeks to strengthen right relationships in the community thus showing the way to Just Peace.

44 It has to be acknowledged that in recent years the churches have become more critically alert to the manifestations of structural violence through the market and have begun to engage in actions of advocacy before the seats of economic and/or political power on behalf of the poor and the victims of market forces. In fact, a clear witness of the churches for Just Peace may meet all the more attentive ears since the social, economic and political leadership is losing trust among the people and acts of advocacy calling for good governance and unmasking corruption are timely. As significant partners in civil society churches are joining acts of resistance against the concentration of economic and financial power in the hands of a small elite. They are participating in campaigns against the trafficking of human persons, especially women and children, and against the illegal trading of drugs and arms. They raise their voices against the diversion of economic and financial resources for the production of arms and call for the introduction of a financial transaction tax. In particular, at the local level, Christian communities in alliance with others in civil society have been able to develop models of an economy of solidarity, with women very often taking the lead. It is in such contexts that the poor and all those that are excluded from competitive market processes cease to be victims. Through micro-credit schemes as those offered by Oikocredit they begin to become active and self-responsible participants in an economy serving the basic needs of the community. In fact, Christians should be prepared to acknowledge that the Gospel of Christ is good news to the poor. It privileges the poor in whom we are promised to meet Christ. This means that any ecumenical programme and policy aiming at poverty eradication will have to link up with the earlier studies and reflections about what it means to be "church in solidarity with the poor."

45 One of the hidden tensions of searching for peace in the marketplace concerns how to relate the struggle for social and economic justice and the commitment to Just Peace. Based on the prophetic affirmation that peace is the fruit of justice, the Vancouver Assembly of the WCC in 1983 declared: "The ecumenical approach to peace and justice is based on the belief that without justice for all everywhere we shall never have peace anywhere."[2] As has been underlined in chapter 4, this affirmation remains true with respect to the lasting, comprehensive peace Christians are promised to receive from God.[3] But this should not be interpreted to mean that advocacy for peace and reconciliation has to wait until justice for all everywhere has been achieved or otherwise be suspected as weakening the commitment to justice and evading the hard issues of economic, social, racial and gender justice. Recent experiences have shown that the work of furthering justice is hampered, if not undermined by the pervasive presence of violence in all its forms. It has become clear that there can be no justice unless the cycle of violence with its devious logic is broken and overcome. The culture of violence today has to be recognized as one of the causes of poverty and injustice; overcoming violence and engaging in efforts of peace building have, therefore, become preconditions for a more just world. The *ECJP* opens with an affirmation of "Justice embracing peace." "Without peace, can there be justice? Without justice, can there be peace? Too often,

we pursue justice at the expense of peace, and peace at the expense of justice….When justice and peace are lacking, or set in opposition, we need to reform our ways." The change of discourse and paradigm that stands behind the concept of the Just Peace not only affects the understanding of peace, but also its criteria and the praxis of justice.

Consequences for the churches

46 The most important consequence for the life of the churches is where reflection, action and spirituality come together. It is the practice of discipleship in the spirit of the Beatitudes, following in the footsteps of Jesus and being ready to engage in sacrificial action, which can help to make the world a better place. The churches are being challenged to appropriate and practice a radical spirituality in confronting the forces that dominate the global market. This implies continuous efforts to build just and sustainable communities, to leave the comfort zone and to mobilize the courage for facing up to overpowering forces.

47 Another consequence calls for the need to challenge the distorted spirituality of consumerism by developing an alternative theology of the "good life" drawing inspiration from the prayer: "Give us our daily bread." In order to confront structural greed it is necessary to have a clear understanding of what is "enough." This must be coupled with a deeper sense of connectedness with nature as God's creation, because ultimately all economy has its subsistence in the earth. The efforts in the present WCC programme on "Poverty, Wealth and Ecology" to identify indicators of structural greed are expected to assist the churches in meeting this challenge.

48 Finally the churches should seek to develop lifestyles that liberate themselves from the ideology of compulsive quantitative growth and even explore the possibility of "de-growth", at least for those who have "enough." As the study document on "Christian Faith and the World Economy Today" (1992) has stated: "The production of goods can be a blessing, as the word good in fact suggests. But to claim and possess more and more goods does not mean that we achieve abundant life, neither in its biblical meaning nor in the secular sense of the word. Ever-increasing production can, paradoxically, lead to scarcity rather than abundance… When we assume that human needs are virtually limitless, the scarcity increases, regardless of the current level of prosperity. However, one cannot be aware of abundance without having an awareness of enough because abundance is more than enough. There are both material as well as spiritual limits to economic growth."4

FOR PEACE AMONG THE PEOPLES

Looking at different situations

49 The *ECJP* recalls in paragraph 39 that – in spite of numerous examples of courageous pursuits of peace and transformation of conflict – "the spirit and logic of violence is deeply rooted in human history" and in recent times has been "amplified by violent applications of science, technology and wealth." This has manifested itself in the threat of nuclear holocaust, the dramatic human reality of which was brought home to the IEPC through a survivor's witness of the explosion of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. More than 100,000 people were killed by the blast and the heat, and 200,000 more perished afterward because of the effects of radiation. The message of the witness war very clear: "No human being should ever have to repeat our experience of inhumanity, illegality, immorality and cruelty of atomic warfare."

50 Since then the major world powers have developed and proliferated nuclear arsenals that in the end are mutually destructive. For the last 60 years the ecumenical community of churches has struggled with other partners in civil society for effective nuclear disarmament and the banning of nuclear weapons, based on the belief as expressed by the Vancouver Assembly in 1983 "that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned an ethical and theological grounds" (see chapter 4, paragraph 45)

51 And yet, even under the shadow of potential mutual destruction through nuclear arms, war continues to plague the lives of peoples. The IEPC listened to a witness from Iraq, a country that during the last 32 years has gone through three wars and an embargo, which by definition is also an act of war. The conference was reminded of the refusal by churches and political leaders, especially in Europe, to support the U.S. invasion of Iraq, referring to the lack of a mandate from the UN Security Council and insisting that using military means must remain the very last option after all other nonviolent ways of reaction have been tried. However, governments tend to seek justification for large-scale military action in the name of "security" giving priority attention to national security defined in military terms and neglecting human security, that is, safety, protection, well-being and sustainable livelihoods for people. From people in Iraq involved in peace-building at community level came the affirmation: "Security does not land in a helicopter; it grows from the ground up."

52 Since the end of the Cold War more and more peoples are faced

with the reality of "new wars", that is, armed struggles fought within a given country with the authorities in place unable or unwilling to protect the security of the people. The IEPC heard experiences especially from the Republic of Congo, where large numbers of women have become the victims of rape, a particularly atrocious "weapon." Since 2005 the United Nations has accepted in principle the new norm under international law of the "Responsibility to Protect." This is defined in terms of three steps, that is, the responsibility to *prevent*, to *react* and to *rebuild*. In practice, however, prevention is being neglected in favour of reaction, believing that "fire power and boots on the ground" will provide security. The World Council of Churches, which in the Porto Alegre (2006) statement "Vulnerable Populations at Risk" had addressed the challenge, of the "Responsibility to Protect," willhave to examine criticallythe potential misuse of the principle and strengthen the emphasis on prevention over against reaction.

53 Prevention gives priority to human security, the security of the people, over against the politics of national security. Here the churches, and in them especially women, have a particular role of providing early warnings in the community about situations that could lead to eruptions of violence. In general, more attention must be given to institutions and relationships in civil society to prevent conditions that could lead to violence. The IEPC was told: "If you don't ask the women, you don't know what's happening." This was substantiated by reference to the role of women in West Africa (especially Senegal and Mali) in establishing a community-based network against small arms preparing the way for the ECOWAS convention of small arms.

Discerning theological and ethical issues

54 The *ECJP* introduces the last section on "peace among the peoples" with the following biblical affirmations: "We are made in the image of the Giver of Life, forbidden to take life and charged to love even enemies. Judged with equity by a righteous God, nations are called to embrace truth in the public square, turn weapons into farm implements, and not learn war any more" (Exodus 20:17; Isaiah 2: 1-4; Matthew 5: 44).

55 Responding to the horrors of World War II, the Amsterdam Assembly of the WCC affirmed in 1948: "War is contrary to the will of God." Since then the churches have struggled with the question whether and under what conditions war can still be considered an act of justice. In 1990 the World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation at Seoul formulated the commitment "to work for the banning of war as a legally recognized means of resolving conflicts, and to press governments for the establishment of an international legal order of peace-making." Echoing this commitment the *ECJP* concludes the paragraph on "main directions" for peace among the peoples with the call to churches to "eliminate weapons that put humanity and the planet at unprecedented risk, and generally delegitimize the institution of war."

56 The IEPC heard an impassioned plea for the churches to live up to this calling and to become the community that "unconditionally says no to war," because "it is impossible to both love our enemies and kill them, it is impossible to reverence life and to be in league with the military-industrial complex….War and the arms trade that feeds it cannot make life for the people on our small planet more just and more secure. It is not simply that crimes are committed by all sides in every war. War itself is the crime." In terms of international law it is true that "in theory, war is already largely outlawed. There are courts to try not only crimes committed in war, but the crime of war itself. But how are the laws of peace to be enforced?" This should become a major concern for the churches in their support for the international rule of law and the establishment of an international order of peace-making strengthening the capacities of the United Nations.

57 The plea was heard with respectful scepticism by those who in referring to the ethical criteria of the "just war" theory believe that, "as a last resort," using military means to fight aggression, occupation and to protect people from the unjust use of force must be considered legitimate. However, the abundant availability of military means all too easily turns the "last resort" into the primary option to respond to armed conflict. Thus, every war tends to become a "just war" for those who fight it. If the doctrine of "just war" were to be applied rigorously, most probably no war under modern conditions could be considered as being just. The churches and the ecumenical community urgently need to wrestle with the ethical problems involved.

58 The IEPC, therefore, affirmed that "we are moving beyond the doctrine of just war towards a commitment to Just Peace." As the *ECJP* states: "The Way of Just Peace is fundamentally different from the concept of "just war" and much more than the criteria for protecting people from unjust use of force; in addition to silencing weapons it embraces social justice, the rule of law, respect for human rights and shared human security" (paragraph 10). But we are only beginning to spell out the ethical, political and spiritual implications of this commitment.

59 Perhaps we should be more modest and realistic and speak of a more just peace. The IEPC was reminded that "the struggle for greater justice will remain a task for every generation, for as long as human society exists…Our faith, our common humanity, our love for one another

commits us to this struggle. But we should never give way to the mistaken assumption, as some Christians sadly do, that 'until there is perfect justice, there cannot be peace.' Rather peace, the rejection of collective violence, is a precondition for the world of tomorrow that will always need to be made more just."

60 The call to reject the collective violence of organized armed struggle poses not only political and ethical challenges, but implies the emotional, psychological and spiritual task to face up to the deeply engrained human tendency to regard others as separate, as a threat to one's integrity and security, as a potential enemy. The vision of Just Peace is rooted in the affirmation that "Christ is our peace." Peace is God's gift in Jesus Christ who through his death on the cross "has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us." He has reconciled those who are divided with God and with one another, creating "in himself one new humanity" (Eph. 2, 14-16). As members of the community that proclaims Christ the embodiment of peace, we are called not only to love our enemies, but to transform enmity itself and thus to tackle violence at its root.

61 Discerning the implications of the way of Just Peace must, therefore, entail the conscious acceptance of vulnerability following in the way of Jesus Christ. There can be no illusion: the price to be paid for the commitment to "overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21) and to transform enmity into partnership is high. As the IEPC was reminded: "Non-violent resistance to evil will never be a quick fix. It will call for long suffering and patience. It will be a living expression of the new world that is not yet."

62 This calls for a critical assessment of the relationship between peace and security. In his famous meditation at the ecumenical conference at Fanø in 1934, where he called for a Universal Christian Peace Council, Dietrich Bonhoeffer declared: "There is no way to peace along the way of safety. For peace must be dared. It is the great venture. It can never be safe. Peace is the opposite of security. To demand guarantees is to mistrust, and this mistrust in turn brings forth war. To look for guarantees is to want to protect oneself."5 Based on a similar critical distinction between peace and security the World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation at Seoul affirmed that "peace cannot be guaranteed through narrowly conceived doctrines of national security, for peace is indivisible. True security must be based on justice for the people, especially for those most at risk, and on respect for the environment."

63 Discussing the question how people at risk can be protected with regard to their need for elementary human security, the IEPC struggled with the new concept of the "responsibility to protect" and the possibility of its misuse, referring in particular to the controversial intervention in Libya. The concern for human security does not only arise with regard to the threat of war or armed violence. In the perspective of working for a Just Peace human security embraces the recognition of human dignity and the respect for and implementation of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights. The right for peace should also be acknowledged as part of the basic human rights. The failure of governments and the social and political order in place to provide for human security is one of the principal reasons for the emergence of situations of violence. Given the consequences of economic and financial globalization in weakening the authority and capacities of governments and in destabilizing the human security of the people, there is an obvious co-responsibility of the international community to prevent dramatic threats to human security. The churches together with organizations in civil society can and should provide signals of early warning to their respective governments as well as to the international community calling for appropriate measures to redress of the situation. This can make a significant contribution in terms of preventing the outbreak of violent armed conflict.

64 However, it became obvious during the IEPC that further clarification is needed regarding how to react when prevention has failed. While it has been suggested to consider the possibility of outside intervention through international police forces bound to international law, no such forces are presently available or trained and the criteria and procedures for such intervention would still have to be worked out. The traditional criteria of the doctrine of "just war" are inadequate for this purpose since they refer to fighting in war. The ecumenical community could contribute to and further the necessary process of clarification. But even then, it should be underlined that the restoration, protection and guarantee of human security cannot be the result of outside intervention; it remains in the hands of the communities concerned whose capacities for establishing a legitimate public order and the rule of law should be strengthened. This is the primary field where the churches together with other religious communities and partners in civil society share in the "responsibility to protect" (see chapter 4, paragraphs 58-78).

Consequences for the churches

65 In situations where the peace among peoples is at stake, both between and within states, those responsible for political decisions and actions very often seek the support of churches and religious communities, either to provide legitimacy for their actions, especially when armed force is being used, or to mobilize the people and secure coherence of the community in facing an adversary. Providing or withholding such support can

make a decisive difference, especially in situations of armed conflict. Conflicts that are interpreted in terms of defending ethnic and/or religious identity and integrity tend to become particularly violent and resistant to efforts of mediation and conflict transformation.

66 The vision of Just Peace obliges the churches to re-assess their self-understanding and their role over against the authorities in place in cases of conflicts that could turn or have turned violent. Their calling to be peacemakers may imply the prophetic task to unmask the root causes of violence and uncover hidden conflicts, thus disturbing a false and artificial peace. Rather than sanctioning the use of force they should seek to de-escalate conflicts and to re-establish communication between the adversaries. As advocates of truth in the public realm they should acknowledge the legitimate interests and grievances of all parties and promote processes of arbitration or mediation. Churches are only beginning to discover and fulfil their important role in terms of conflict transformation. The ecumenical community should urgently begin with establishing Just Peace ministries and support the already existing networks of Christian groups and initiatives responding to this call. The particular role and the contribution of women to conflict transformation need special recognition and support (see chapter 5, paragraphs 32ff).

67 Churches that seek to establish an order of Just Peace among the peoples will be in the forefront of campaigns for disarmament and the effective reduction of military expenditure. If only a fraction of the public funds that are regularly spent for maintaining military forces and their potential deployment were made available for strengthening the capacities for prevention and nonviolent conflict management and transformation, it would have a decisive effect for the protection of human security. As the IEPC has been told: "Churches all over the world have to challenge the governments in their countries to stop producing, funding and purchasing weapons. It is a scandal that weapon production and trade is a source of economic wealth." The experience of women from religious communities in West Africa who have resisted the proliferation of small arms and prepared the way for the ECOWAS convention on small arms could serve as an example for other communities. Churches and their leaders have a particular role with regard to processes of demobilization and the re-integration of former members of armed groups into the community.

68 Many conflicts among peoples involving mutually exclusive ethnic and /or religious identities require patient efforts for the reconciliation and healing of memories in order to prevent the recurrence of violence between the communities involved. Here the churches are as much part of the problem as they can contribute to a "solution." Several workshops during the IEPC drawing on experiences in Northern Ireland, South Africa and Sri Lanka have underlined the significance of such efforts for the aim of building cultures of peace. In the context of their ecumenical and interfaith dialogues, the churches have to begin addressing the ethical, theological and spiritual challenges involved in the healing of memories.

69 Peace among peoples requires an international order of Just Peace based on the rule of law and the promotion and implementation of human rights. The WCC since its foundation has been a strong, though not uncritical, advocate of the United Nations, which is still the best structure available to promote the goals of international peace and justice. In chapter 4, paragraphs 79 and following, the present challenges facing the United Nations in their task of building an international order of peace are discussed. Addressing the needs of people for human security and strengthening the rule of law have been set out. The claims of hegemonic power manifested by the prevailing global economic and financial system threaten to erode all previous efforts to build a viable international order of peace and justice. The states that dominate the current international order and hold permanent seats on the UN Security Council also maintain large arsenals of weapons of mass destruction. They do so in the name of their own national security, narrowly defined. The lesson is not lost on newly emerging powers, nor on isolated regimes. Nuclear deterrence is an infectious doctrine. Governments and the United Nations diagnose the problem consistently but have not proved able to cure it. A world order of nuclear haves and have-nots is inherently unstable and ungovernable. What is more, the current and growing deployment of high-technology, long-range and increasingly robotic weapons systems only amplifies the existing instability. Global military expenditures driven by national security are at record-high levels. Human security commitments such as the Millennium Development Goals are falling far short of agreed targets.

70 The churches should strengthen their engagement with the United Nations and the ongoing processes of reform of the structures of global governance. As the WCC assembly at Porto Alegre (2006) stated: "The real test for any steps in this reform process will be whether it increase the chances for life in dignity and sustainable communities on the ground. This is the privileged context for the work and witness of the churches. They are entrusted with a message of life and hope that can dispel suspicion and paralysing fears and set people free to gain courage and confidence in their capacity to transform their lives in community" (chapter 4, paragraph 89).

The aim of building an international order of peace that addresses the needs of people for human security and life in just and sustainable communities and strengthens the rule of law requires the development of new forms of global governance.

4. JUST PEACE CHALLENGES

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE

1 *About Violence.* If we could calculate exactly the devastating tragedy and human destruction caused by violence, it would be enough to convince the world of the need to study the methods and philosophy of nonviolence. The loss of productivity, creativity and vital resources in our societies and institutions due to violent and antagonistic conflicts is incalculable.

2 *Myths about nonviolence.* There are myths about nonviolence that must be dispelled: among others that nonviolence is soft and passive, that it is the opposite of violence, that it can only be practiced by persons with a long spiritual tradition who live in a democracy, or that it is simply a subcategory within strategies of confrontation and direct action.

3 *What nonviolence is.* Contemporary approaches to nonviolence owe a great deal to the theory and practice of Mohandas K. Gandhi, a great Hindu leader, and the inter-religious, intercultural movement he

led. His term for "nonviolence" was *satyagraha*. It is the proactive and affirmative effort to nonviolently change institutionalized policies, practices and conditions that deny persons their full dignity as human beings. Nonviolence resists and challenges the passive acceptance of unjust conditions. Nonviolence proceeds from a long tradition of disturbing the peace and challenging unjust or degrading aspects of the status quo.

4 Nonviolence also analyzes conflicts in a different manner than the simplistic notion of "us against them," or "good vs. bad," which are polarities that characterize our cultures. Nonviolence seeks to understand the factors that underlie the problems at hand in order to create an effective strategy to manage or change them. This strategy is based on universal values that are deeply rooted in all the world's great religious traditions.[1]

5 *Examples of nonviolent resistance during WWII.* During World War II in a hidden village in the mountains of Southeast France, called Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, a "conspiracy of kindness" organized by a Protestant Reformed pastor by the name of Andre Trocmé helped save the lives of 5000 Jews from Nazi and Vichy France persecution and death camps. There, at great personal risk, the whole town, committed to the preservation of human life, took in, cared for, lodged and sent on to safety as many Jews as the population of the whole town. Ordinary people, many of them suffering from great poverty themselves, resisted the policies of the Nazi and French collaborationist governments by hiding strangers, not for days, but for years. Their humanitarian sense was so deep that no resident of Le Chambon ever rejected, denounced or betrayed a single Jewish refugee.

Pastor Andre Trocmé served as a moral compass for the town. He showed the population of Le Chambon practical and effective ways to resist. When the Vichy authorities demanded that these activities cease, since it was impossible to hide such large scale and long-term actions, the pastor answered: "These persons came in search of help and refuge. I am a pastor. A pastor does not abandon his flock. I don't know what a Jew is. I only know human beings." Although Trocmé was arrested and after having been released and having had to hide from the Nazis, and although his cousin Daniel died in a concentration camp, his wife carried on with the solidarity work. An elder in the town later recalled: "We did not protect the Jews because we were moral or heroic persons. We helped them because it was the human thing that had to be done...."

A similar kind of resistance occurred in Denmark after the Nazi occupation. When the Danish people realized in 1943 that the occupiers had issued orders to round up and deport to concentration camps the 7,500 Danish Jews, a massive citizen effort went into effect. From all sectors of society, clergymen, fishermen, farmers, housewives, professionals, factory workers, the Lutheran church, the population mobilized to hide, transport and protect the Jews from the Nazi plans. 99% of Danish Jews were saved, most finding refuge in Sweden. Although the attractive story of King Christian X wearing a yellow star on an armband, thus rallying a similar solidarity of all citizens with their Jewish compatriots so they could not be identified, is inspiring, it seems to be legendary. However as Danish Queen Margrethe II is quoted in the book *Queen in Denmark* by Anne Wolden-Raethinge, "To me, the truth is an even greater honour for our country than the myth."

6 Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., Baptist pastor, student and practitioner of Gandhian nonviolence, who drastically changed the course of history in the United States through his leadership of the nonviolent movement for civil rights of the Afro-American population, identifies six principles that characterize nonviolence and its practitioners which are useful to keep in mind[2]:

- *Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.* It is nonviolent resistance to evil; it is spiritually, mentally and emotionally proactive; it seeks to persuade the opponent of the justice of its cause.
- *Nonviolence seeks to achieve understanding and friendship.* The final results of nonviolence are redemption and reconciliation; the purpose is the creation of the Beloved Community.
- *Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice, not persons.* Nonviolence recognizes that those who do evil are also victims and not bad people.
- *Nonviolence believes that absorbing undeserved suffering redeems, and has immense potential to educate and transform.* Nonviolence accepts suffering without returning it, and, if necessary, receives violence but never inflicts it; nonviolence willingly accepts the consequences of its acts; absorbs suffering and has the power to convert the enemy when reason or argument fails.
- *Nonviolence chooses to love rather than hate.* Nonviolent love is active, not passive; does not stoop to the level of the person who hates; believes that it is in loving the opponent that we demonstrate our love for ourselves; it is infinite in its capacity to forgive and restore community; it resists injustice and knows that the response may be hostility; recognizes that all life is interrelated.
- *Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice.* The person who practices nonviolence has a profound conviction that sooner or later justice will prevail; believes that God is a God of justice.

- *Biblical basis of nonviolence.* The biblical story begins with God's loving purpose of well-being for the world. God saw his creation and saw that it was very good. There was plenty, there was harmony, there was life.

7 But the first chapters of Genesis reveal the violence and evil that lurks in the heart of humankind. Although Cain murders his brother in chapter 4, before doing so God pronounces a hopeful and empowering word. God tells Cain that although sin (murderous violence) is awaiting an opportunity to pounce and dominate him, Cain can master it.

8 Later in the same chapter, Cain's descendant, Lamec, boasts about the vengeance he will take – not life for a life, but seventy times seven, which is, of course, the same number that Jesus gives Peter to teach him unlimited forgiveness.

9 Active, loving nonviolence starts with a God who takes the initiative to bridge the gap with an alienated and violent humankind to forgive, restore and reconcile.

10 Peace and nonviolence are at the centre of the Good News, because God chooses to forgive his enemies instead of destroying them, goes to any length in order to seek and save them, and gives up his Son Jesus Christ to suffer unjustly in order to call us back to the Father's household. Without this way of treating enemies, there would be no gospel, no good news – only the perpetuation of the endless cycle of vengeance and destruction.

11 Jesus in his teaching, life example, and his voluntary death, becomes the model of nonviolent living for the early church. "Love your enemies, return good for evil, imitate your heavenly Father, forgive, place your life at the service of others," he teaches.

12 When on trial, Jesus confronts those who were mistreating him by asking them to point out when he had spoken wrongly, or to the contrary, to explain why they had struck him. With this question Jesus confronts his adversaries with their humanity, with their reason and with their moral formation.

13 In his arrest and crucifixion, Jesus absorbs without retaliation, all that was done to him and in so doing, leaves the door open for conversion, from the thief on the cross down to this very day.

14 The New Testament writers unanimously reveal a church that followed in the footsteps of Jesus: Stephen in his martyrdom, Paul in Romans 12:19-21, Peter in 1 Peter 2:21, James in 1:20 and 3:18 and the book of Revelation, where a slain Lamb is the nonviolent warrior (Rev. 5:12).

15 *Practical Applications: Alternatives to Violence Programme (AVP)* – The AVP was developed by the Society of Friends or (Quakers) for the formation in nonviolence, conflict resolution and peace-building, originally in prisons, through a series of three participative workshops which in the end produce multipliers of the concepts.

16 The training builds capacity in four areas: 1) discovering the spiritual force in each person to confront conflict in a creative and nonviolent way; 2) strategies of communication which permit responsible and nonviolent claims; 3) encouraging the sense of community, participating in it and acknowledging other people in all their worth as human beings; 4) stimulating cooperation which values the contribution of each person and develops the skill of consensus decision-making for the benefit of the group.

17 In Colombia the AVP has given training to church groups of different communions during this last decade. In a country which suffers from so many levels and types of violence, this programme has become a bridge for reconciliation as well as a valuable tool for conflict transformation and for breaking down barriers between persons, families, working groups, internally displaced people, young students, former participants in armed groups, community day-care mothers, lawyers, teachers and church leaders.

18 Among different groups this program has achieved personal, family and community transformations which constitute true instances of nonviolence and peace, which assure a new way of responding to conflict. It builds on a new awareness of the capacity to respond in a nonviolent fashion that is inherent to every person.

19 AVP has been enriched by a new program to help persons who have suffered violence of any kind, but especially the violence of displacement by armed conflict, to accompany them in their process of mourning. It is not easy for a person who has suffered violence to process those feelings which include anger, desire for revenge, impotence, negation and deep sorrow, which remain buried and at times result in acts of violence against the surrounding persons. AVP and other projects, in an effort to overcome violence have initiated these trauma-healing workshops in order to process past grief and build future.

20 Some of the testimonies that we have witnessed are deep transformations in interpersonal and family relationships and in communities of displaced families who, after formation, have served as bridges for mediation or reconciliation in different circumstances.

21 The results have been transformed work relations between supervisors and workers where authoritarian models have changed into egalitar-

ian and democratic ones; community work where participants are taken into account by the leaders; groups of displaced women who transform the violence suffered in armed conflict in processes that create life and hope in healthy relationships based on nonviolence, self-confidence and creative conflict transformation; legal circles where lawyers and peace judges found valuable alternatives in communication with people in conflict situations, inviting them to utilize responsible ways of speaking to transform a situation of conflict in an opportunity for building bridges in the midst of differences.

22 Other testimonies speak of changes in self-awareness that involve the participant's language, gestures, ways of resolving conflicts, ways of seeing and valuing other people; of learning to affirm self and others, of increasing the ability to listen, of arriving at consensus, in sum, of adopting nonviolence as a lifestyle.

23 In like fashion the workshops work on changes in attitudes on gender, human dignity, human rights, assertiveness, forgiveness, self-esteem, all of which are aspects of peace-building. The emphasis on community building opens the possibility of promoting social change, in a collective way, in an assertive and nonviolent way in the direction of an alternate society.

24 The AVP has been well received in Protestant, Roman Catholic and ecumenical circles. In this way it becomes a valuable experiment in bridge-building which in itself constitutes a concrete exercise in peace-building. It becomes a respectful and tolerant encounter in the midst of differences, which in turn is a sign of peace and hope among churches.

25 These actions on behalf of a nonviolent and alternative lifestyle are seeds of peace which little by little are planted in sectors of the population where violence is a daily affair. Nevertheless it becomes imperative to motivate churches, communities, governmental and nongovernmental organizations to support this work and help follow-up with these persons and communities who have adopted nonviolence as a lifestyle, so that the seeds that have been planted yield a permanent harvest.

26 Few persons know of *the role played by the churches* in the fall of the Berlin Wall in November of 1989. In 1983, Pastor Christian Fuhrer of the Lutheran Church of Saint Nikolai in Leipzig (East Germany), had initiated prayer meetings, open to the public every Monday at 5:00 p.m. In each meeting, those in attendance read the Beatitudes together: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." Later a Reformed church in Leipzig joined in and also began a prayer vigil, as well as churches in East Berlin, Dresden and elsewhere in Germany. By 1989 the attendance at these Prayers for Peace had increased considerably. These prayer meetings formed the nucleus of the nonviolent protest movement that emerged. In September of that year, the New Forum movement was founded in which topics that were generally off limits were debated in East Germany. It did not take long for the protest movements to grow into massive events each week. In October, long-time strongman Erich Honecker resigned, and in November the Wall fell. Through it all, in the midst of the events and situations that changed daily, the churches constantly advocated nonviolence and dialogue. A young person in East Germany said that the amazing thing about the transition and reunification was not that it had occurred, but that it had occurred in such a peaceful fashion without a single life lost.

27 In Colombia, many churches have prayed for peace. In the year 2000, the *Mennonite Church of Teusaquillo in Bogotá*, initiated a weekly time each Wednesday from 12:30-1:30 p.m. called a Moment for Peace. The time is divided between prayer and Bible reading (half hour) and reflection and discussion on a topic related to peace and national affairs, combining in a sense the two actions of the churches and New Forum in East Germany. The Moment for Peace has brought together a wide representation of persons from different walks of life, but mainly of victims of the armed conflict, to pray for the peace of Colombia, to be strengthened in the Word of God, and to seek ways to work to make justice, peace, and solidarity real. From this initial experience the local church has invited churches in Colombia and abroad to open their doors to a weekly time of prayer, to change together the course of history in the country. One church in a very conflictive area of Colombia expressed it in writing this way: "The new history of Colombia will be written on our knees."

28 The *Foundation for Reconciliation* sponsors Schools of Forgiveness and Reconciliation. Although they grow out of the experience of violent conflict in Colombia, they have spread to different countries of the world. Under the leadership of a Consolata priest, Fr Leonel Narvaez, they hold that when the pain of the past petrifies a person's walk, it is difficult to think of a future. This calls for overcoming a memory that seeks retaliation, vengeance and death, for life cannot flourish when it is rooted in the dark labyrinths of pain and tragedy. The Foundation considers that without denying the just demands of the impoverished of the earth, none of the human contradictions merit shedding human blood.

Desmond Tutu said, "Without forgiveness there is no future." The schools point to the need to follow a methodology to work through trauma, bitterness, anger and thirst for vengeance, and, building on a person's inner spirituality move toward the possibility of forgiveness and reconciliation in order to build a new future.

29 The *Peace-Building Communities of the Philippines* is a Christian-

Even what appears to be isolated charity work needs to be and can be placed in a larger framework, seeing its relationship with the larger world and the structures that cause the problems as well as the long-term and holistic solutions called for.

based organization that seeks to be a community of peace-building, training and strengthening each other to "devote the same discipline and self-sacrifice to nonviolent peace-making that armies devote to war." In a country affected by social injustice and corruption, insurgent responses, religious factionalism and liberation movements, the Peace-Builders Communities seek to train both church and non-church people to be leaders to multiply effective peace and reconciliation teams and communities that can be relevant to the peace-making needs of their country.

30 A somewhat different alternative to violence are the *Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT)*, a community made up of trained volunteers from different cultures that forms part of an international, ecumenical organization. Their work is designed to interfere with the plans and actions of violent groups, whether legal or illegal that cause pain and suffering to the people who dwell in areas of conflict. In the Middle East they have been present in Hebron and the rural area of Palestine for a number of years, witnessing and "getting in the way for peace" in the ongoing aggression of Israeli settlers against the Palestinian population. In Colombia they are based in, though not limited to, the Middle Magdelena region of Colombia. They work together on grassroots initiatives to expose and transform structures of domination and oppression through active nonviolence in order to make possible a world grounded in respect, justice and love, even of enemies.

31 In Palestine, T*he Popular Committee of Bil'in* along with local residents, Israeli activists, and internationals, have for over six years been demonstrating against the illegal wall which has separated the village from their farmlands. They have carried out weekly demonstrations with many injuries, arrests and the deaths of some nonviolent protesters. Although the demonstrations are often met with aggression from the Israeli Defence Forces, the voice of the Bil'in townspeople is not silenced due to their persistence and to the constant communication of one of the leaders, Iyad Burnat, head of the popular committee against the wall, to an international audience in cyberspace called Friends of Freedom and Justice in Bil'in. The use of internet and the different platforms available to do so is a new way to expose injustice and create networks of solidarity around the world.

32 Although the examples of peace-making, peace-keeping and peace enforcement are endless, it is also necessary to understand that even what appears to be isolated charity work needs to be and can be placed in a larger framework, seeing its relationship with the larger world and the structures that cause the problems as well as the long-term and holistic solutions called for. An example of this is a feeding programme by one local church. It operates a feeding programme, called Bread and Life, for street people and in two marginalized, violent and impoverished neighbourhoods in the city of Soacha (Colombia). But it has twelve guiding principles to help it understand itself as a prophetic word to the structures which cause hunger in the world and the need to change. These are:

- Food is the right of every human being. God gives enough for everyone.
- There is sufficient food in the world for everyone. Every person should be able to eat.
- The image of God is in each person and must be protected.
- Feeding the hungry is not a matter of charity. It's a matter of justice.
- The priorities of society are mistaken. They must be corrected. More bread, fewer arms.
- A lasting peace requires people without hunger.
- Feeding others does not, in the first place, require money, but working together in community.
- Feeding others does not, only require writing up projects; it requires decision.
- Giving food to the hungry with love and respect, transmits the love of God, points to Jesus the Bread of Life, and is the mission of the church.
- Giving food requires reflection on land ownership, distribution of wealth, social structures, and
- What God wants for humankind.
- We give food to empower people to leave behind their prostration caused by economic and socio-political structures that keep them in that situation.
- The changes that must be made are political decisions made by human beings. Since things can be changed, keeping people hungry is a crime.

33 *Seven commitments to a nonviolent life.* In one country the churches have proposed to their society a seven-fold commitment to nonviolence which they distribute freely, particularly on 21 September, International Day of Peace, Nonviolence and Ceasefire. In formulating the commitment they have taken out "churchy" or religious language and seek to

propose a way of life that can be assumed by all people for the good of a society in which all can enjoy life. The seven commitments are:

- I commit myself to cultivate a personal and family spirituality of love and nonviolence.
- I commit myself to respect and protect the dignity of human life in all its forms as well as to the care of creation.
- I commit myself to practice nonviolence in all my family relations, rejecting physical, verbal, and psychological mistreatment.
- I commit myself, in love toward my neighbour, to resolve conflicts in a nonviolent fashion.
- I commit myself to build solidarity and to work towards an alternative economy that promotes holistic and sustainable human development.
- I commit myself to not carry arms nor participate in militaristic projects.
- I commit myself to place my gifts, talents, abilities, time and resources at the service of constructing a society of life, justice and peace through nonviolent action.

BEYOND JUST WAR VS. PACIFISM

34 In their search for reconciliation and peace and their efforts to discern the way of "Just Peace" Christians and their communities have been struggling to resolve the tension between the two major Christian peace traditions that has shaped much of the ecumenical discussion for the last more than 60 years, i.e. the position of those in the historic majority churches who follow the theory of the "just war" and those in the Historic Peace Churches who advocate a position of nonviolence and Christian pacifism. The approach developed here with regard to the issues of war and peace, violence and nonviolence builds on the conviction that the Christian community as the body of Christ is to live as a prophetic sign of peace in a violent world. By its calling and vocation the Christian church is to be a peace church. This conviction is itself the fruit of a long process of critical self-assessment in the Christian community that has taken place in and through the ecumenical movement. It indicates a fundamental paradigm shift in theology and Christian ethics that has gradually taken the discussion beyond the old debate between the just war theory and pacifism towards the vision of Just Peace and the commitment to just peacemaking. The "Ecumenical Call to Just Peace" is meant as a public signal of this shift and as an invitation and encouragement for the churches and their partners in civil society as well as in other religious communities to join the way of Just Peace.

35 However, this transformation of Christian thinking about war and peace, violence and nonviolence is itself a complex and ongoing process in which the two historical traditions with their different emphases still continue to shape the approach to contemporary reality and the manifestations of violence. Even though the former opposition between the positions of the just war theory and Christian pacifism has given way to the recognition of a gradual convergence, the two positions still remain distinct and find themselves engaged in a pilgrimage where the pilgrims are at different places along several routes. It is important, therefore, to recall where we come from in this process.

36 There is a common recognition that in the beginning the Christian community followed the paradigm of active nonviolence based on the account of the alternative praxis of Jesus and his followers in the gospels. The early church tended toward pacifism and the peace-builders' calling to love and serve the neighbour. Church historians remind us that for its first three centuries the early church disapproved of war and military participation because of how it understood the agency and action of God in the world in light of the parables, prophetic teachings and pastoral ministry of Jesus. In the fourth century AD, Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity and a reassessment became institutionalized in how Christians are to act in the service of an imperial power. As a direct consequence, the public ethics of the church shifted precipitously.

37 Beginning in the fourth century, a transformation took place where the symbols, images and core principles of Christian self-identity were seen as symmetrical with imperial power. And it is here in western history, in the age of Constantine first, that an emerging cross and sword ideology was gaining congruence with the mission and witness of the church. In a remarkably short period of time in the church's history, the symbols, images and principles of the church crystallized into fixed and wedded structures of ecclesial and state power. The further development of these structures to imperial gain is what scholars refer to as Christendom. The long age of Christendom took manifold forms through the centuries, where religious rituals and civic narratives reframed the Christian story into one that sanctioned imperial power. Theologians and leaders of the faith constructed this self-understanding within reflections on what eventually became identified as a discourse around "just war." These reflections on "just war" originally represented a broad attempt to justify Christians taking up arms for the sake of the state or governing entity, as the phrase implies.

Both Christian pacifism and the just war tradition have evolved historically and have responded to changing historical circumstances. Neither of the two represents a fixed system of theological or ethical affirmations.

38 Within Christendom, theologians and politicians argued "just war" not merely for abstract reasons. There is no doubt that real and present dangers were a sober reality for Roman and, later, medieval daily existence. Early on, threats to the Empire of barbarian invasions led Christian leaders to ask how they could responsibly join their Christian emperors in wars that might protect their interests, vindicate justice and ultimately preserve peace. The New Testament offered little counsel on these intransigent realities, so thinkers blended their evolving Christian attitudes on the virtues of political life in a state sympathetic to their religion, with the ideals of war and peace in classical antiquity and in the Hebrew Bible.

39 In the spirit of these realities, the function of "just war" theory was never to simply license war but to place careful ethical limits on warfare in service to the eventual goal of peace and justice in society. Medieval scholastic theology systematically developed the theory by emphasizing that a "just war" must meet the following requirements: it must be directed by a legitimate authority *(legitima potestas)*; it must have a just cause *(causa justa)*; it must be governed by a right intention; i.e. to restore peace and the re-integration of the adversary into the lawful order *(recta intentio)*. Later developments of the theory added the requirement of proportionality of the means employed, the reasonable assurance of success, and the just conduct during warfare. Indeed, the criteria for justifiable warfare are so demanding that political scientists and peace studies scholars today agree that a truly 'just war' is quite near impossible to ascertain, as a truism that applied to the Roman Empire and up to and through the thirty-years war of the seventeenth century, and as much as to our post-modern religious and national realities today. Nevertheless, the culture of Christendom reinforced structures of power to the point that the theory of "just war" was used to provide religious principles for sanctioning violence against other human beings.

40 While the theory of just war remained the guiding framework for the historic majority churches in their (critical) response to the role and action of states that considered war as a legitimate right in defending their sovereignty and pursuing their national interest, Christian pacifism has always been the ethical position of dissenting and minority groups, beginning with the monastic orders, through the radical reform movements in the medieval church up to the Anabaptist movement and the contemporary grouping of Historic Peace Churches. Like the just war position, Christian pacifism has incorporated ideas and influences from secular political philosophy. However, at its core Christian pacifism seeks to be obedient to and follow the teaching and the example of Jesus, particularly his blessing of the peacemakers in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:9), his witness for God's reign of peace and justice and his practice of non-violent love, even of the enemy. In its commitment to radical discipleship Christian pacifism has always been critical of the alignment of church and state in the Christendom era and has sought to distance the church as an alternative community from any involvement with state power. The most visible manifestation of Christian pacifism has been the conscientious objection to service in armed forces and the refusal to bear arms.

41 Both Christian pacifism and the just war tradition have evolved historically and have responded to changing historical circumstances. Neither of the two represents a fixed system of theological or ethical affirmations, even though in their origin they clearly reflect different understandings of the nature and mission of the church and of its calling in the world. Both have been subject to frequent misrepresentations and misunderstandings that have questioned their validity as genuinely Christian peace traditions. Referring to the active involvement of the historic majority churches in actions of warfare, from the crusades, the Reconquista in Spain and the violent incursion into Latin America up to the wars of religion in the 16th and 17th centuries, the just war tradition has been (mis-)represented as providing ecclesial and moral legitimacy to war, acts of conquest and the deliberate killing of enemies. The followers of Christian pacifism have been (mis-)represented as failing adequately to address the demands of justice in a world of radical evil by withdrawing into the attitude of non-resistance and by refusing to participate in efforts to restore justice through the use of force. It is important, therefore, to underline that in their contemporary expression both traditions want to respond to the Christian calling to promote peace with justice, and both acknowledge the preference for nonviolent peace-making and the gospel call to love one's enemy; both also respect the biblical injunction that killing another human person is a violation of the will of God and that the use of lethal violence in war is sinful and can never be called just.

42 The point where they have parted ways is the question of how to respond to the reality of violence in human community life. The Christian realism of the just war tradition would maintain that there are situations where the use of armed force is the only responsible way of responding to violent manifestations of power threatening the life and security of

a community. It would emphasize, though, that armed force may be used only as a 'last resort' after all other nonviolent and peaceful ways of resolving the threat have been exhausted. And even then the decision to use armed force would be considered as the choice of the lesser of two evils. Christian pacifism on the other hand would maintain that genuine peace with justice cannot be achieved with violent means, that the possibilities of nonviolent peacemaking have been underrated and that the argument of using armed force only as a 'last resort' very often continues the cycle of violence and thus creates conditions that inhibit the achievement of justice. The pacifist commitment to nonviolencenonviolence is ultimately grounded in an eschatology of trust in the God's victory over evil revealed in Jesus' life, teaching, death and resurrection.

43 In the twentieth century, numerous Christian leaders and professional scholars of religion around the world reveal a growing recognition that we are at twilight in Christendom. It is difficult to overestimate the simultaneous ecclesial significance and social dissonance of this emerging disconnect between the Christian self-identity on war, and the structures of political power. There are manifold areas in the world where religion is manipulated by the state, of course. But the emergence in world Christianity of a broadening consensus on war, and the independent Christian response to rejecting war as a *Christo*-civic responsibility, is relatively new. The ecumenical movement has been instrumental in promoting this shift in Christian self-understanding with regard to war and the structures of political power.

44 The first assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting at Amsterdam in 1948 in the aftermath of World War II declared under the headline "war is contrary to the will of God" that:

"War as a method of settling disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. The part which war plays in our present international life is a sin against God and a degradation of man. We recognize that the problem of war raises especially acute issues for Christians today. Warfare has greatly changed. War is now total, and every man and woman is called for mobilization in war service. Moreover, the immense use of air forces and the discovery of atomic and other new weapons render widespread and indiscriminate destruction inherent in the whole conduct of modern war in a sense never experienced in past conflicts. In these circumstances the tradition of a just war, requiring a just cause and the use of just means is now challenged. Law may require the sanction of force, but when war breaks out, force is used on a scale which tends to destroy the basis on which law exists.

- *"Therefore the inescapable question arises – can war now be an act of justice? We cannot answer this question unanimously. Three broad positions are maintained:*
- *There are those who hold that, even though entering a war may be a Christian's duty in particular circumstances, modern warfare, with its mass destruction can never be an act of justice.*
- *In the absence of impartial supra-national institutions, there are those who hold that military action is the ultimate sanction of the rule of law, and that citizens must be distinctly taught that it is their duty to defend the law by force if necessary.*
- *Others, again, refuse military service of all kinds, convinced that an absolute witness against war and for peace is for them the will of God and they desire that the church should speak to the same effect.*

"We must frankly acknowledge our deep sense of perplexity in face of these conflicting opinions, and urge upon all Christians the duty of wresting continuously with the difficulties they raise and of praying humbly for God's guidance. We believe there is a special call for theologians to consider the theological problems involved. In the meantime, the churches must continue to hold within their fellowships all who sincerely profess such viewpoints as those set out above and are prepared to submit themselves to the will of God in the light of such guidance as may be vouchsafed to them."[3]

45 Faced with the question how Christians and their churches should respond to the reality of violence in the contemporary struggles for justice and liberation, particularly the struggle against racial oppression, the Central Committee of the WCC in 1973 received the report of a study on "Violence, Nonviolence and the Struggle for Social Justice." Reviewing the different positions that study comes to a similar conclusion as the Amsterdam assembly. The report states:

"It is in the context of this reality that the methods of resistance to unjust and oppressive political and economic power must e considered. There are among us three distinct points of view about methods:

(a) Some believe that nonviolent action is the only possibility consistent with obedience to Jesus Christ. They recognize that this discipline is hard and will often be unsuccessful….Nonviolence is for them a witness to the transcendent power of God in Jesus Christ, a way of faith which will be justified by him and his power alone.
(b) Some are prepared to accept the necessity of violent resistance as a Chris-

tian duty in extreme circumstances, but they would apply to it criteria similar to those governing a just war….Violence will then be considered as the ultima ratio. It is the act of freedom which can only be undertaken, with the guilt it brings, confident in the final judgement of God.
(c) Some find themselves already in situations of violence in which they cannot help but participate. Nonviolence does not present itself as an option unless they would withdraw totally from the struggle for justice. In this situation the problem becomes to reduce the sum total of violence in the situation and to liberate human beings for just and peaceful relations with each other…The problem of Christian responsibility, then, is to humanize the means of conflict and to build structures of peace wherever possible within it.

We have not been able to reduce these three radically different points of view to agreement. We are convinced however of three things:

(a) There are some forms of violence in which Christians may not participate and which the churches must condemn [ranging from conquest of one people by another to torture and the indiscriminate killing of non-combatants].
(b) We are convinced that far too little attention has been given by the church and by resistance movements to the methods and techniques of nonviolencenonviolence, in the struggle for a just society…
(c) We reject, however, some facile assumptions about nonviolence which have been current in the recent debate. Non-violent action is highly political It may be extremely controversial…A non-violent movement may produce peripheral violence and have the problem of controlling it….”[4]

46 In 1975 the Nairobi Assembly of the WCC in a statement on the “World Armaments Situation” addressed the following appeal to the churches: “The churches should emphasize their readiness to live without the protection of armaments, and take a significant initiative in pressing for effective disarmament. Churches, individual Christians and members of the public in all countries should press their governments to ensure national security without resorting to the use of weapons of mass destruction…”[5] And following an international hearing on “Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament” in 1981 the Vancouver Assembly of the WCC strengthened this position by declaring:

“We believe that the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethical and theological grounds…

We urge the churches to press their governments, especially in those countries which have nuclear weapons capabilities to elaborate and ratify an international legal instrument which would outlaw as a crime against humanity the possession as well as the use of nuclear arms…

On the same basis, and in the spirit of the 5th Assembly’s appeal to the churches “to emphasize their readiness to live without the protection of armaments,” we believe that Christians should give witness to their unwillingness to participate in any conflict involving weapons of mass destruction or indiscriminate effect.

It is with a deep sense of pastoral responsibility that we make these affirmations. To live up to them will be no simple matter for any Christian or church, but we recognize that the consequences of taking such positions will be far more serious for some than for others. We state these convictions not as a condemnation or in judgment of others, but confessing our own weakness, calling on the churches and Christians to support one another in love as in these ways we seek together to be faithful to our common calling to proclaim and serve our one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, the Life of the World.”[6]

47 Finally, the World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation at Seoul (1990) in its affirmation on “the Peace of Jesus Christ” declared:

“…We are called to seek every possible means of establishing justice, achieving peace and solving conflicts by active nonviolence.

We will resist doctrines and systems of security based on the use of, and deterrence by, all weapons of mass destruction, and military invasions, interventions and occupations [as well as] doctrines of national security which are aimed at the control and suppression of the people in order to protect the privileges of the few… [and we commit ourselves] to practice nonviolence in all our personal relationships, to work for the banning of war as a legally recognized means of resolving conflicts, and to press governments for the establishment of an international order of peace-making.”[7]

48 This brief review of major official statements by the World Council of Churches is evidence of the fundamental transformation that has taken place in the ecumenical position on war and peace, violence and nonviolence. This development has affected the traditional positions of both the advocates of the just war theory and of Christian pacifists who have found themselves to be working allies time and again. In fact, all weap-

ons of mass destruction violate both just use and pacifist criteria, so these Christian peacemakers have stood side-by-side in opposition to nuclear arms and worked together for nuclear disarmament. They joined in anti-apartheid campaigns in Southern Africa and anti-regime campaigns in Eastern Europe. They sought truth and reconciliation processes in several countries, as well as other ways to help heal memories of past violation and remember its victims in public ways (through memorials, museums, school curricula and interfaith worship, for example). For the so-called "war on terror," they have rejected the crusade tradition whereby any just cause justifies all means necessary to achieve it.

49 In fact, the decision by the World Council of Churches in 1994 to launch a "Programme to Overcome Violence" and the subsequent decision by the Harare Assembly in 1998 to broaden this initiative to the "Decade to Overcome Violence 2001-2010 – Churches seeking Reconciliation and Peace" is an indication that the ecumenical community has begun to leave the traditional positions of the just war and pacifism behind and focus its attention on the vision of "just peace." The programme to overcome violence was established by the Central Committee in 1994 "with the purpose of challenging and transforming the global culture of violence in the direction of a culture of just peace…" In its decision the Central Committee declared; "that, in view of the need to confront and overcome the 'spirit, logic and practice of war' and to develop new theological approaches, consonant with the teaching of Christ, which start not with war and move to peace, but with the need for justice, this may be a time when the churches, together, should face the challenge to give up any theological or other justification of the use of military power, and to become a koinonia dedicated to the pursuit of a just peace. …"

50 This assessment has been strengthened as a result of the Decade to Overcome Violence. Today, the churches in the ecumenical movement are virtually unanimous not only in condemning nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction, but also in the affirmation that war can no longer be considered an act of justice. The commitment to confront and overcome the "spirit, logic and practice of war" has in fact rendered the traditional theory of 'just war' obsolete and thus leads to the resolve to give up any theological or other justification of the use of military power. And in fact, the traditional institution of war has lost its legitimacy in international law as a consequence of Art. 2.4 of the Charter of the United Nations which states: "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations." While Art. 51 of the Charter recognizes the right of member states for individual or collective self-defence in the case of an armed attack, Chapter VII reserves for the Security Council the ultimate authority to decide about appropriate ways to respond to threats to threats to peace and acts of aggression, including measures involving armed forces.

51 The need to develop new theological approaches which start not with war as a given and inevitable reality, but with the need for justice also challenges Christian pacifism which, at least in the past, has sometimes been an excuse to retreat from public responsibility and a betrayal of the biblical mandate to seek the peace of the city. The determined pursuit of a just peace must be prepared to respond when the order of just relationships in the community is being challenged and must be able to rely on the possibility of sanctioning those who deliberately violate this order, if necessary by the force of coercion. Under the rule of law, the civic or state authorities are accorded the 'monopoly' of the use of coercive force in order to maintain peace with justice in the community. In any given community this normally is the responsibility of police agents. In the international community the authority to decide on the use of coercive force, including the use of armed forces, has been accorded to the Security Council of the United Nations; however, given the continuing weakness of the rule of law in the international community, this principle has often been overruled by states following their national interest.

52 Ecumenical dialogues, in particular the Catholic-Mennonite dialogue, have pointed out the important difference between an army and a police force, including an international police force operating through institutions backed by international law. Police are embedded in a community whose members assume that the police force is working on their behalf. While police know how to use arms they, unlike soldiers, are not trained primarily for armed combat and use arms only as a last resort. Many police officers pride themselves on how infrequently they have to draw a gun and how often their work overlaps with and allies with the work of people in other helping professions. Their specialty is saving life, not destroying it. They do not kill their way to victory. If killing is involved, it is not to achieve "victory"; it is to prevent further harm to the innocent.

53 As the German Mennonite Congregations in 2009 declared: "We distinguish military violence from actions of force and protection used by police. The latter must adhere to the principles of law, respect all human rights and aim at the reduction and de-escalation of violence. Wherever possible police actions should desist from employing weapons and using violence." The report, however, adds the observation that "to date there

The end of the Christendom era brings profound possibilities for the churches to re-claim their calling as the body of Christ.

are no international police troops who have been trained in the principles of law and justice, the use of proportionate means, techniques for deescalating and limiting violence, and who stand under the control of international legal institutions. A further problem…is the criteria for employing such troops, which are reminiscent of the dogma and intentions of 'just war.' We fear that in the actual deployment these international police forces could easily be caught up in the conflict and might then use military violence. Together with the community of churches we wish to work toward ways of ensuring that both in definition and in practice such 'international police troops' do not incline toward violence."[8]

54 It is in this context that the concept of "just policing" has been put forward as a proposal to overcome the tension between the positions of just war and of Christian pacifism.[9] While the implications of this concept are still being worked out, not only for the ongoing debate about ethically appropriate ways of responding to threats to international peace but also for the structures of maintaining the rule of law in any society, the concept strengthens the need to distinguish between violence and the lawful use of force which in principle is directed towards protecting and saving life rather than killing and destroying. An ethics of lawful force needs to be based on clear moral criteria. In the discussion many refer to the traditional criteria of the "just war" as a possible framework for developing an ethics of lawful force. However, if this ethics is to be conceived as guiding the practice of just peacemaking, a new and different ethical imagination may be needed than the one reflected in the theory of just war.

55 The end of the Christendom era brings profound possibilities for the churches to re-claim their calling as the body of Christ. But the churches and their pastors, elders, theologians, sociologists, missiologists and other thinkers and dreamers will need to rethink almost every aspect of church life through a post-Christendom lens – including Christian understandings of war. This is a task of vital importance and pressing urgency.

56 Just war theory has been used unjustly to promote and defend too many wars. Likewise, Christian pacifism has sometimes been an excuse to retreat from public responsibility into sectarian reservations of spiritual life which betray the biblical mandate to seek the peace of the city. Just war theologians and Christian pacifists alike agree that to love our neighbour means we have some responsibility for our neighbour's welfare and well being. We want to serve the public good but the old dialogues and debates between just war and pacifism no longer seem to capture Christian imaginations that are most alive and awake. Persons of artful and ethical faith understand that *we live only what we can imagine*. The passionate pursuit of a just peace is inviting us beyond the tired categories of pacifism vs. just war. Cognitive scientists, poets and prophets all remind us that reason has a history; reason can only follow the paths that are first broken open by the imagination. A prophetic realism is now pointing to the yet unimagined possibilities of just peacemaking. The past century of ecumenical engagement and constructive work has been calling forth new Christian imaginaries as we together rediscover the poetic and prophetic vision of the Christian story of peace-building.

57 The church is the Body of Christ, and its mission and witness is to be a peace-building fellowship *(koinonia)* of Christ in the world. Through the centuries and for manifold reasons, the fundamental *ethos* of the church, central to the activity of peace and reconciliation, was minimized and manipulated. The wound to the church remains wherever this central mission and witness are abrogated in the world. The church today must reclaim its message without appealing to categories of simplification between "just war" and "pacifism."

RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT (R2P)

58 For the longest period the ecumenical discussion on the ethics of war and peace was shaped by the political condition of the super-power confrontation during the Cold War, focussing on the threat of a potential nuclear war and stressing the need for disarmament. The ethical and theological issues in the debate between advocates of just war and of pacifism were considered with regard to military conflicts between states. As reported in the previous section, this evolving discussion led to the implicit consensus that war in the traditional sense can no longer be considered an act of justice and that the "spirit, logic and practice of war" has to be overcome. This does render the classical theory of "just war" obsolete and finds expression in the resolve to give up any theological or other justification of the use of military power.

59 It was also pointed out in the previous section that the Charter of the United Nations, while accepting the right of member states for actions individual or collective self-defence against aggression by other states, reserves for the Security Council of the United Nation the ultimate authority and right to decide about appropriate measures to respond to any threat to international peace and security, including the eventual use of armed forces. Under the conditions of the Cold War this authority

given to the UN Security Council under international law could hardly be invoked and remained politically ineffective. Nevertheless, the ecumenical community of churches has always affirmed and defended the authority of the United Nations as the only available expression of an international rule of law over against a situation characterized by the law of force.

60 The end of the Cold War and of the bipolar system of international relations created a new situation. A new international order of peace under the authority of the United Nations appeared as a realistic possibility for the first time since the end of World War II. Significant steps for disarmament were implemented and long lasting conflicts in Southern Africa, Central America and in Asia could be settled peacefully. The international response to the invasion of Kuwait by neighbouring Iraq was seen as proof that the system of international security as envisaged by the Charter of the UN was workable.

61 However, a series of new, essentially internal conflicts within states placed the international community before fundamental challenges. The aborted intervention in Somalia, the dramatic events in Rwanda leaving the United Nations paralyzed, the conflicts on the former Yugoslavia and especially the NATO intervention in Kosovo without Security Council authorization all called for a fundamental reconsideration of the rules and criteria regarding the use of military force in response to violent conflicts. There were persistent calls for "humanitarian intervention" in situations where the human rights and the security of people are gravely endangered. The United Nations in responding to such situation was faced with the dilemma inherent in its charter, i.e. the tension between the prohibition of intervention into the internal affairs of sovereign states (Art.2.7) and the affirmation of the universal validity of human rights and the recognition that the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is essential for international peace (Art.1.3 and 55c). Neither the Charter nor the Universal Declaration on Human Rights provided the United Nations with appropriate instrumentalities and with the authority judicially to pursue violations of human rights. Only the convention against genocide of 1948 placed an obligation on the member states to prevent and to punish genocidal actions as a crime under international law. However, this convention so far has never been applied.

62 It was against this background that the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches in 1994 initiated the Programme to Overcome Violence, and in several statements considered whether, and under what conditions, the use of coercion is an acceptable tool to enforce human rights and the international rule of law in violent or potentially violent situations. In a "Memorandum and Recommendations on International Security and Response to Armed Conflict", formulated especially in the light of the Kosovo experience, the Central Committee in 1999 called for a study "on the ethics of so-called 'humanitarian intervention', taking into account the legitimate right of people to be free of undue interference in their internal affairs and the moral obligation of the international community to respond when states are unwilling or incapable of guaranteeing respect for human rights and peace within their borders." The report of this study was presented to the Central Committee in 2001 at its meeting in Potsdam/Berlin, the very meeting when the Decade to Overcome Violence was officially inaugurated. The report under the title "The protection of endangered populations in situations of armed violence: toward an ecumenical ethical approach" was controversially discussed by the Central Committee, redrafted and eventually received and commended to the churches for further study, reflection and use. In the discussion the concept of "humanitarian intervention," it was strongly criticized (and deliberately avoided in the title) and the well known differences with regard to the use of force for the purpose of protection of endangered populations came to the fore.

63 While the study report was being considered in the member churches, an international commission sponsored by the Canadian Government (ICISS), in response to a request by the General Secretary of the United Nations, presented a report which placed the debate on the issues of humanitarian intervention on a new basis. Under the title "The responsibility to protect" the report successfully shifted the terms of the discussion from the question of the legality or a presumed 'right to intervention' to the "responsibility to protect", from the interests of states to the concerns of the people living under the threat of armed violence, and thus from the emphasis on state security to the comprehensive understanding of human security. Since then the responsibility to protect the human rights and human security of people has been gradually accepted as a new norm under international law. It leads to a new understanding of state sovereignty as responsibility, and in cases where states are unwilling or incapable of meeting their responsibility for the human security of their own people, this responsibility shifts to the international community. The report from the international commissions emphasized the primary concern for prevention. When prevention fails or has failed any reaction on the part of the international community has to be guided by clear criteria which follow the traditional rules of the just war theory. No decision about reaction should be taken without a clear perspective for rebuilding.

64 The study report of the WCC which had already anticipated the shift from the concern about "humanitarian intervention" to the emphasis on 'protection of endangered populations' proposed basic considerations and criteria for actions to protect people in situations of armed internal conflict. Its understanding of the Christian approach is expressed in the emphasis on "just peacemaking." The report states: "Just peacemaking requires that Christians not endorse any coercive policy, whether economic or military, before seeking positive incentives to promote peace among aggrieved adversaries. For Christians the aim must always be the building or restoration of just, peaceful and humane relationships." With regard to the specific question of using military force for the purposes of protection the report restates the different ethical and theological convictions that have been presented already in the previous section. However, it tries to offer detailed criteria that could guide the competent authorities to arrive at ethically responsible decisions.

65 The report elicited only a limited response among the member churches. Substantial reflections were received from the Church of Norway, the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), as well as from a representative meeting of members of Historic Peace Churches. While the responses from Norway and Germany offer important additional considerations and suggest refined criteria, the statement from the Historic Peace Churches expresses concern about the document and its insufficient theological basis. In five points they formulate their response:

1. *A biblically and theologically grounded pacifism regards seeking God's justice as central and integral to a non-violent philosophy of life. To state the issue as if we have to choose between nonviolence and justice is a false dichotomy.*
2. *We can identify a number of normative practices for seeking justice within principled pacifism.*
3. *The use of violent force as a 'last resort' to secure justice creates conditions that inhibit the achievement of justice. Too often we work under the false assumption that, if we cannot find a non-violent solution to a conflict, the use of violent force will take care of the problem.*
4. *We call on the churches to emphasize the distinctive witness to the world that flows from our commitment to the Spirit of Jesus Christ and our identity as the body of Christ in the world.*
5. *The pacifists and those reasoning with 'just war' principles should make more modest claims about their ability to guarantee success. Though both traditions seek justice, neither tradition can guarantee that justice will be accomplished. Both traditions involve faith visions about how to 'secure' a future in which justice is more likely to be achieved. The pacifist commitment to nonviolence is ultimately grounded in an eschatology of trust in the victory over evil of God revealed in Jesus' life, teachings, death, and resurrection.*

66 One of the consequences drawn from the analysis of the responses to the study report is the need to develop further the concepts of just peace and just peacemaking in the course of the Decade to Overcome Violence. While all ecumenical documents and statements underline the priority of non-military instruments in safeguarding peace, there remains the basic difference of opinion regarding the potential use of military force for the purpose of protection. Some continue to specify further the criteria for the use of force as a last resort; the Historic Peace Churches disagree, as indicated above. Can the vision of Just Peace offer a perspective beyond this disagreement?

67 In April 2005 the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs organized an expert consultation on the ethical and theological issues regarding the responsibility to protect with the aim of "forming the ecumenical mind and addressing ethical dilemmas on prevention and protection of people in peril." As a result of this consultation a revised statement was prepared for consideration by the WCC assembly at Porto Alegre in 2006. The statement under the title "Vulnerable Populations at Risk. Statement on the Responsibility to Protect", after reviewing briefly the course of the discussion both in the ecumenical movement and in the international community, begins by reaffirming the calling of the churches to a ministry of healing and reconciliation. This implies the commitment to the primacy of nonviolence and the special responsibility to protect the vulnerable. The statement affirms the shift of the debate from intervention to responsibility and declares: "To be faithful to that responsibility to protect people means above all prevention…although churches have different views on the use of force for human protection purposes, they agree on the essential role of preventive efforts to avoid, and if possible, tackle the crisis before it reaches serious stages. Protection becomes necessary when prevention has failed. Hence, the churches emphasize the necessity to concentrate on prevention."[10]

68 The statement underlines the necessity to distinguish prevention from intervention. For the international community "the responsibility to protect is first and foremost about protecting civilians and preventing any harmful human rights crisis." But then it continues with the following very carefully worded declaration:

"In calling on the international community to come to the aid of vulnerable people in extraordinary suffering and peril, the fellowship of churches is not prepared to say that it is never appropriate or never necessary to resort to the use of force for the protection of the vulnerable. This refusal in principle to preclude the use of force is not based on a naive belief that force can be relied on to solve intractable problems. Rather, it is based on the certain knowledge that the objective must be the welfare of people, especially those in situations of extreme vulnerability and who are utterly abandoned to the whims and prerogatives of their tormentors. It is a tragic reality that civilians, especially women and children, are the primary victims in situations of extreme insecurity and war."

69 The statement adds that there is no guarantee of success for the option to resort to force for protection purposes and takes note of the fact that "some within the churches refuse the use of force in all circumstances. Their form of responsibility is to persist in preventive engagement and, whatever the cost – as a last resort – to risk nonviolent intervention during the use of force. Either of these approaches may fail too, but they both need to be respected as expressions of Christian responsibility."

70 Having on ethical grounds allowed consideration of the option to resort to force, the statement concludes, not by continuing the discussion about criteria, but rather by specifying the "limits of the use of force." These become apparent in the following points:

- *"The churches do not… believe in the exercise of lethal force to bring in a new order of peace and safety. By limiting the resort to force quite specifically to immediate protection objectives, the churches insist that the kinds of long-term solutions that are required….cannot be delivered by force…."*
- *"The use of force for humanitarian purposes can never be an attempt to find military solutions to social and political problems…Rather, it is intended to mitigate imminent threats and to alleviate immediate suffering while long-term solutions are sought by other means…In the long run, international police forces should be educated and trained for this particular task, bound to international law…"*
- *"The force that is to be deployed and used for humanitarian purposes must also be distinguished from military war-fighting methods and objectives. The military operation is not a war to defeat a state but an operation to protect populations in peril…It is more related to just policing…in the sense that the armed forces are not employed in order to 'win' a conflict or defeat a regime…"*

- *If churches call for protective intervention by the international community they will expect a discerning and decision-making process strictly bound to international law. Such calls are likely to be reluctant, "because the churches, like other institutions and individuals, will always know that the current situation of peril could have been, and should have been avoided. The churches in such circumstances should find it appropriate to recognize their own collective culpability in failing to prevent the crises that have put people in such peril."*

71 In its resolution the assembly affirmed the principles put forward in this statement and asked the Central Committee to consider further developing guidelines for the member churches. It underlined prevention as the "key tool and concern for the churches… Because churches and other faith communities and their leadership are rooted in the daily physical and spiritual realities of people, they have both a special responsibility…to contribute to the early detection the assembly emphasized the need for the international community and national governments to strengthen their capability in preventive strategies and violence-reducing intervention skills, and to invest much greater resources and training for nonviolent intervention and accompaniment of people.

72 The recommendations conclude with the request to the Central Committee "to consider a study process engaging all member churches and ecumenical organisations in order to develop an extensive ecumenical declaration on peace – dealing with topics such as just peace, the Responsibility to Protect, the role and the legal status of non-state combatants, the conflict of values (for example: territorial integrity and human life), – to be adopted at the conclusion of the Decade to Overcome Violence in 2010." It is in response to this recommendation that the "Declaration on Just Peace" and this companion document have been prepared.

73 As was to be expected, the discussion has continued after this official statement by the assembly of the WCC. The fact that the present effort to develop the vision of Just Peace has its origin in a recommendation concluding the statement on the "Responsibility to Protect" has discredited is credibility in the eyes of students of an ethics seminar in the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminar at Elkhart/Indiana, USA. While appreciating the priority emphasis placed on prevention they disagree with any endorsement of the use of military or police violence in seeking to protect the neighbour and with the reasoning behind. Also Church and Peace, the European network of Peace Churches, has carefully considered the statement by the Porto Alegre Assembly and has made a declaration including the following points:

- *"Based on our understanding of Christian discipleship and peacemaking, we oppose that section of the Concept (scl. Responsibility to Protect) which allows the use of military force to ensure the protection of threatened peoples. Even if military force is held only in reserve for use as a measure of last resort, this influences the planning of civil action during the earlier phases of conflict by consuming a disproportionately high share of the resources available for aiding civilians. Also its availability strengthens the traditional attitude that military force is the inevitable answer.*
- *We maintain our rejection of using violent means to attempt to create good outcomes, even when under the guise of policing. In conflicts referred to under R2P, the use of military weapons is assumed and these weapons would kill and wound without distinguishing between those people involved in the violence and those not, and their use has nothing in common with procedures governing police interventions under international law.*
- *Even in situations where no solution seems possible and where violence is so endemic that a call to counter it with further violence rises among victims and within us too, we persists in recommending the use of nonviolent means towards every human being, means which as disciples of Christ we have in abundance…Violence in any form can never serve to bring about lasting peace with justice. Only the path of loving one's neighbour and loving one's enemy holds any promise. We invite all churches to resist together with us the temptation of justifying the use of deadly weapons even as a last resort."*

74 One of the expert consultations during the second half of the Decade to Overcome Violence focussed on the Responsibility to Protect. In their conclusions the participants underlined that the discussion on the responsibility to protect "obliges the churches as the universal body of Christ to redefine their appropriate public role vis-à-vis nation states and the international community. The churches have to overcome the Constantinian captivity seeing themselves as appointed partners of the respective political institutions, sharing in their responsibility for maintaining public order. This implies to articulate afresh the "grammar" of Christian discipleship, i.e. what are the decisive marks of following Christ in a world of violence."

75 They emphasized that even maximum protection efforts cannot remove the fundamental vulnerability of human life. "In fact, it can lead to mutual isolation and thus undercut the ties within and between communities which are the basis for the sense of trust and security…. Since the effort to attain invulnerability is not only illusory but also destructive of community it is imperative to acknowledge the limits of the R2P norm. The possibility of failure in the effort to provide security and protection has to be considered realistically. Acknowledgement of failure can even strengthen the sense of legitimacy; on the other hand, any claim of moral superiority has to be avoided on the part of those called to exercise the R2P."

76 The consultation also addressed the concept of Just Peace. "The ecumenical declaration is expected to focus on and to develop the concept of a 'just peace'. This will require reopening the discussion about the relationship between peace and justice. In biblical thought both are inseparably related: 'shalom' embraces both peace and justice. However, in the effort to shape a viable order of life in community justice and peace can enter into conflict. The concept of a 'just peace' calls for a critical re-assessment of traditional notions of both peace and justice. How can this be translated into the context of operating under the R2P norm? Can the responsibility to protect be limited to cases of massive violations of human rights in the sense of threats to the physical integrity of life? How do we deal with other dramatic threats to human security arising from economic 'structural violence'? What are the appropriate forms of 'intervention, reaction, and rebuilding' in such cases? A 'just peace' can only be built on right relationships in community. How can the concepts of 'restorative' or 'transformative' justice be applied to the search for building a 'just peace'."

77 In discussing the political and practical challenges involved in the proposed new international norm the consultation addressed the issues of prevention, reaction and rebuilding. With regard to reaction it emphasized "that reaction must include the effective resort to nonlethal means of coercion in instances where prevention fails. The (Working) Group appreciated the exploration of policing as a model for coercive action in response to intense crisis and people in extreme peril. Much more attention should be paid to the ethical dimensions and criteria for any intervention that potentially involves lethal force. Intervention criteria inevitably involve political judgments, much more so than they do juridical judgments. Issues of right authority are obviously paramount in any reaction that engages lethal force and the Group emphasized the need for broad ecumenical reflection on questions of governance linked to the resort to force. The Group also noted the importance of further reflection on the nature of force that is authorized, a concern that links to the policing discussion." The consultation repeated the conviction that the churches have a special role both with regard to prevention and to rebuilding. "The Christian ecumenical community is a worldwide community linked by common values and concerns, as well as by functioning communications mechanisms, and the North-South character of this community is espe-

The dilemma faced by the United Nations as the guardians of the international order of peace is inherent in the principles of its Charter which is an expression of the state-based understanding of international order.

cially relevant to prevention and rebuilding elements of the responsibility to protect"

78 The proposed new norm of the Responsibility to Protect was fully endorsed by a High Level Panel on "Threats, Challenges and Change" established by the Secretary General of the United Nations and recommended in the report by the Secretary General on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the United Nations. Since then little progress has been made in the international community in reaching agreement on its implications. This brief review of the parallel discussion in the ecumenical movement shows both the potential and the difficulties associated with this concept. For the churches these difficulties relate less to the issues of legality and more to legitimacy, especially of the option of using force for purposes of protecting people in peril. The repeated suggestion to differentiate between the use of military and police force appears to provide a way forward but it clearly implies a fundamental shift in approaching situations of armed conflict. So far the vision of Just Peace has not been appropriated seriously in this discussion even though there have been frequent references to it. It would certainly strengthen the case of those who are insisting that the potential of alternatives to violence in the response to situations of armed conflict has so far not been seriously explored.

AN INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF PEACE

79 The preceding section on the proposed new norm of the "responsibility to protect" has already pointed to one of specific challenges regarding efforts to build an international order of peace. The challenge arises from the state-based understanding of international order which considers peace as the absence of armed conflict between sovereign states. However, in the contemporary situation the threats to peace are no longer limited to potential inter-state conflicts. In fact, since the end of the Cold War we are confronted with the reality of "new wars" which have broken out within states and in which non-state actors are the prime adversaries. These internal conflicts which oppose government forces and armed groups fighting for autonomy or trying to impose cultural, ideological or religious hegemony, often under the leadership of war lords, do not pose an immediate threat to international peace but severely endanger the security of the people and the peace of the community. How can an international order of peace be built that protects not only state security and serves to manage or resolve conflicts between states in a peaceful manner, but that serves the interest of the people to live in peace and protects human security?

80 As has been pointed out in the preceding section, the dilemma faced by the United Nations in view of the internal conflicts in Somalia, Rwanda and Kosovo prompted a discussion about an intervention from outside in the interest of protecting endangered people in situations of armed conflict. The dilemma faced by the United Nations as the guardians of the international order of peace is inherent in the principles of its Charter which is an expression of the state-based understanding of international order. It is based on the willingness of sovereign nation states to cooperate with each other, to refrain from interference into their internal matters and especially to refrain from the use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of another state (Charter of the UN Art. 2.4 and 7). The conventions of international humanitarian law, especially the Geneva Conventions, are legal agreements between nation states addressing specific limitations of the use of force in inter-state conflicts. Non-state actors in internal conflicts are not party to these conventions.

81 At the same time, the Charter of the United Nations affirms the universal validity of human rights and recognizes that the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is essential for international peace (Art 1.3 and 55c). The preamble of the Charter explicitly states:

"WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

- *to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and*
- *to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and*
- *to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and*
- *to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom…"*

82 The acknowledgement of human rights as developed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and in the subsequent International Covenants on civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural rights constitutes the core of the international rule of law and the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states explicitly that the recognition of the "inherent dignity and of the equal and in-

alienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." The fundamental challenge for an international order of peace is to bind together the basic aims of peace and justice, the concern for security and the recognition of human rights under the universal rule of law.

83 In a "Memorandum and Recommendations on Response to Armed Conflict and International Law" the Central Committee of the WCC in 1999 addressed the serious questions arising for the churches and the ecumenical movement in relation to the international intervention in the Kosovo crisis, the Committee. The memorandum recalled that the World Council was formed "in response to appeals like that made in 1920 by the Ecumenical Patriarchate which urged the churches to join together to give witness to the nations with respect to the need for a just, peaceful world order and effective international institutions to promote and sustain it. Thus, from the earliest beginnings the ecumenical movement's commitments to church unity, human rights, peace and justice, and the international rule of law have been bound together." In 1983 the Vancouver assembly had said that without justice for all everywhere we shall never have peace anywhere – an affirmation which remained true with respect to the lasting, comprehensive peace Christians receive from God. "Yet the conflicts of the past decade have shown that action for peace in the more limited sense of controlling armed conflict becomes an unavoidable priority in the face of today's massive threats to justice and life itself. The churches and the international system need to consider more deeply in the present context how the complementary and interrelated needs of people for both peace and justice can be more effectively related."

84 The same memorandum then went on to discuss concerns regarding the international response to situations of armed conflict which had become urgent since the end of the Cold War pointing to:

- *"the erosion of the authority and capacity of the United Nations and its institutions created to develop, codify and guarantee respect for the international rule of law;*
- *the unwillingness, especially of influential states, especially in the West, to revise appropriately their policies and actions on international peace and security in the light of the new needs and opportunities created by the end of the Cold War;*
- *the tension between principles in the United Nations Charter of non-intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign states, and the obligation of the international community to intervene on humanitarian grounds when states fail to respect the human rights of people within their borders;*
- *the complex interrelationship between the need for justice as the essential basis of peace, and the need for peace as essential for the pursuit of justice; and*
- *the ever more pressing challenges confronting churches in particular national and international conflicts, and the ecumenical movement as a whole, in efforts to promote non-violent approaches to conflict transformation and resolution, and post-conflict healing and reconciliation."*

85 More than ten years later, these concerns have become even more urgent. Even though, the affirmation of the WCC's commitment to the United Nations as expressed in 1966 by the Geneva Conference on Church and Society remains valid:

"The UN is the best structure now available through which to pursue the goals of international peace and justice. Like all institutions it is not sacrosanct and many changes are necessary (for it) to meet the needs of the world today. Nevertheless we call upon the churches of the world to defend it against all attacks which would weaken or destroy it and to seek out and advocate ways in which it can be transformed into an instrument fully capable of ensuring the peace and guaranteeing justice on a worldwide scale."

86 In fact, the commitment to building an international order of peace and justice goes back to the very early years of the ecumenical movement at the beginning of the last century. Initially it focussed on the League of Nations responding to the devastations caused by the First World War and was further developed by the ecumenical conferences at Stockholm (1925) and Oxford (1937). At the end of the Second World War the principles for a future world order developed at Oxford served as the basis for the ecumenical contributions to the process of shaping the Charter of the future United Nations as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The important story of the involvement of ecumenical leaders in this process is being recalled in a memorandum adopted by the Central Committee of the WCC on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995. However, the same memorandum also refers to some of the new challenges regarding a viable international order. In fact, through its involvement in the struggles for justice and liberation the WCC and other partners in the ecumenical movement progressively turned away from the preoccupation with international structures to movements of people with the aim of building up an "oikoumene of solidarity" over against the "oikoumene of domination" represented by the existing political, economic and financial structures. Attention focussed

more and more on the "peoples' agenda" and on the new role of non-governmental organizations and of civil society organizations.

87 Since then, the consequences of the process of globalization and the crisis of the global financial and economic system pose new challenges to the ecumenical search for a viable international order of peace and justice which would be able to counteract the further weakening of multilateralism as a consequence of the dominance of national interest and to stem the tide of increasing fragmentation of the international order and the exclusion of large sectors of the population. Ecumenical declarations responding to the challenge of globalization have called for a radical transformation of global structures focussing their critical analysis on the fact that the claims of hegemonic power manifested by the prevailing global economic system threaten to erode all previous political efforts of building a viable international order of peace and justice. The W CC assembly at Porto Alegre (2006) in its "Call to Love and Action" in the interest of an "Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth" (AGAPE) pointed to the fact that "people all over the world experience the impact of imperial forms of power on their communities" and expressed the commitment on the part of the churches "to reflect on the question of power and empire from a biblical and theological perspective, and take a firm faith stance against hegemonic powers because all power is accountable to God."

88 The aim of building an international order of peace that addresses the needs of people for human security and life in just and sustainable communities and strengthens the rule of law requires the development of new forms of global governance including a fundamental reform of the system of the United Nations. The WCC assembly at Porto Alegre (2006) declared in its "Statement on UN Reform": "The changed global situation …obliges the UN and member states to engage in a serious process of reform in order to retain the capacity to respond to the basic mandate of the UN and to the aspirations of the people of the world. The reform process must continue beyond the framework of the UN organization and aim at improving global governance based on the principle of multilateralism." Referring to the outcome of the summit meeting on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the UN the statement affirmed: "One significant achievement of the summit was the acknowledgement that the realisation of peace/security, development/social and economic justice and the implementation of human rights are inseparably linked. This should serve as the fundamental framework and policy orientation for the continuing process of reform. In fact, for people on the ground it has always been obvious that there can be no security in a situation of utter deprivation; that economic development at the expense of the recognition of human rights, in particular the rights of the marginalized, women, children, indigenous and differently-abled people does not serve the cause of social justice; and that without basic human security and the satisfaction of human needs the affirmation of human rights loses its meaning."

89 After commenting critically on the efforts to translate the inseparable linkage of the three pillars of security, development and human rights into institutional and policy changes the statement refers particularly to the role of non-governmental organizations in the process of reform. "Non-governmental organisations play an important role at the UN providing crucial information, monitoring decision-making processes, creating opportunities for the voices from the grassroots, often the victims of international policies, to be heard and to overcome attitudes of narrow self-interest and promote the spirit of multilateralism. Churches are called to continue and strengthen their efforts to play a part in this vital role of engaging with the UN and holding it and member states to account for their decisions and policies. The unique role that religions or religious organisations could play in addressing conflict, and working for peace, human rights and ending poverty is not yet fully realised. There is an urgent need for the UN and member states to strengthen the capacity to deal with the growing interaction between religion and politics. There is also an urgent need for the churches and the WCC to strengthen their own capacities to continue and improve their engagements with the UN… The real test for any steps in this reform process will be whether it increases the chances for life in dignity and sustainable communities for the people on the ground. This is the privileged context for the work and witness of the churches. They are entrusted with a message of life and hope that can dispel suspicion and paralysing fears and set people free to gain courage and confidence in their capacity to transform their lives in community." The vision of Just Peace as presented here aims at giving shape to this message and to the common calling of the churches in the World Council of Churches.

Education for peace is more than mere instruction in the strategies of work for peace. It is a profoundly spiritual formation of character.

5. JUST PEACE PRACTICES

PEACE EDUCATION

1 Every church, irrespective of its doctrine, is responsible for a good education of all its members and for a good example to all persons in the world around. The process of peace education must develop permanently throughout our lives. As the earliest place of education, the family plays an important role. The school and all political structures must also be involved in the processes of peace education. Persons who are being educated today will take decisions tomorrow. The process of peace education requires a long effort, but if it is being fulfilled, it will have many good consequences for all of creation.

2 Education for peace is more than mere instruction in the strategies of work for peace. It is a profoundly spiritual formation of character that happens over a long period of time. Growth in the biblical understanding of peace, learning about the temptations that lead people away from peace into violence, examining our narratives about how we describe

to ourselves those who may be our potential enemies, learning to engage in practices of peace (especially for children and adolescents), learning to care for the earth as a way of cultivating peace, and making prayer for peace a prominent part of our worship: all of these things promote peace. Peace education is not simply acquiring certain items of knowledge; it is about formation of character and building reflexes into behaviour that will respond nonviolently in the face of provocation.

3 Peace is a habit of mind. Therefore it can be "taught." Such peace education – as it is understood in Christian terms – should eventually become "applied theology," that is, everyday life practice. For this reason, all Christian teachers should translate the peaceful message of God into a kind of universal language and practice, which all students in school should gradually be able to acquire and make their own. Peace education implies the process of kindling in young people the desire to build a more and more peaceful world – a world based on a responsible relationship with oneself, on peaceful relationships among peoples, and between human beings and the natural environment (as promoted e.g. by Assisipax International). It is not a question of merely offering contents related to peace, but a question of teaching methods and attitudes. These are ways of bearing witness to one's belief in the value of all human beings and ethical principles. If they are based on transparency, on mutual respect and positive attitudes towards the other, they provide a solid basis on which peace education may be promoted. In each individual there is something positive, as little as it may be, even just a gleam, since each person was created in God's image. Thus "positiveness" involves discovering and developing this gleam.[1]

4 Peace education needs to be part of religious instruction in the churches at all levels. It needs to begin with children, but must be extended to adolescents and adults as well. The formation to be agents of peace begins by looking to models of those already engaged in peacebuilding. For children, parents must be the first agents of peace they encounter, who serve as signs of peace not only in what they say, but in what they do. As children grow and mature into themselves being agents of peace, the churches must provide space, encouragement, and active support in this formation. That involves introspection of all members of the church, into how their choices, their actions and their lifestyles do or do not make them servants of peace. It means also giving special support to those who have special gifts for promoting specific pathways of peace – for these are gifts of the Spirit of Peace within the churches and for the sake of the world. Some will have distinct capacities for accompanying victims of violence; others, for settling disputes; still others, for caring for the earth. (Initial statement)

5 Every worship service can and should educate for peace. In principle, the whole of the Christian Church – especially its Protestant manifestations – can be seen as an institution of education, if we understand 'education' as not limited to a merely cognitive transfer of knowledge but encompassing a holistic process of character formation. This understanding of education comes from the recognition that human beings are made in God's image. It therefore means essentially "formation of the heart," and includes educating and nurturing for peace. Alongside the life of worship, over the centuries churches have founded many educational institutions for children, young people and adults at every stage of life. The education given at these institutions always encompasses both that fundamental element identified above and an explicit inculcation of the values and standards that grow out of the Christian faith. The formation of the heart, ethical guidance and practical work for peace belong together and cannot be separated.[2]

6 Education simply cannot begin too early in human life. A Christian understanding of education will therefore seek to inculcate values of peace and justice from the very beginning. Thus, bringing children up to value peace needs to form an essential part of the elementary Christian education that largely takes place in nursery schools. The aim of the practical work of these facilities is firstly to show how peace and justice have their roots in the Christian religion – for instance by the example of Jesus and to make that understandable to children. Secondly, it is to enable them to put the Christian understanding of peace into practice in real-life, everyday situations. This is why it is important for the social, linguistic, cultural and religious difference found within nursery schools to be admitted, taken seriously and used as a starting point for these educational processes. This includes knowledge of one's own roots, respect for what is different or unknown, and the development of a culture of fair, constructive debate. Education and nurturing for peace is a lifelong task.[3]

Examples

7 In Korea the churches conduct Youth Peace Camps during school breaks. They invite people to the only zone of neutral waters in the Korean peninsula and offer them a chance to experience firsthand the armistice situation of the Koreas through a trip to the restriction line for civilian passage. Participants encounter officers, UN personnel, and learn about humanitarian activities from workers of international NGOs and religious organizations. In the process young people also begin to reflect about the historical background and the political and societal situations which can

lead to the breaking out of war. They learn to analyze and resolve conflicts in homes, schools and the society through workshops and role plays.[4]

8 The Dutch Mennonite Training and Mediation Centre (Geweldloos Samenleven) trains mediators to train others in mediation and for work in church and society. It offers courses in resolving church conflicts and does mediation work and coaching in congregations. The curriculum of the Bienenberg Theological Seminary in Switzerland includes courses on the peace witness of the church. In 2009 it established a special institute, Compax, devoted to training in spiritually-based conflict transformation. The German association Oekumenischer Dienst Schalomdiakonat (OeD) has set itself the task of providing learning opportunities in the area of nonviolent conflict transformation for women and men from different churches, countries and occupations. Participation in OeD courses qualifies them for professional or voluntary work for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. People who have attended OeD courses work in projects in their own countries or abroad, on a longer or short-term basis. The Brussels–based Association *Sortir de la Violence* offers seminars to parishes and groups that want to deal with conflict in a constructive way.[5]

9 The EKD sees its responsibility to educate as continuing throughout people's lives, taking various forms and involving different kinds of institutions. Alongside nursery schools, church schools, the provision of religious education in the state school system, children's services and work with children, young people and confirmation candidates, are particularly significant. Church journalism and its presence in the media – including on the internet – make their own contributions.

10 The Evangelical Mission Agency in South-West Germany (EMS) organized two workshops on nonviolent conflict transformation, one in 2005 in Ghana, another one in 2006 in South Africa. The aim was to train trainers in methods of nonviolent conflict transformation, enabling the participants to carry out workshops on this topic in their local churches and pass on their knowledge to others. Participants in Ghana were 28 youth workers of the PCG, four delegates of the international EMS Youth-Network and two delegates of the Presbyterian Church of Cameroon. In South Africa 30 youth workers of the MCSA and three delegates of the international EMS Youth-Network took part. The workshops were planned in cooperation with the hosting churches. The facilitators of both workshops came from local NGOs working in the field of peace-building. Participants conveyed that their expectations have been met and that they acquired a lot more knowledge on the topic of nonviolent conflict transformation. The subject of nonviolent conflict transformation became more important and turned into a project which they want to carry on in their community. They don't just see the idea of nonviolent conflict transformation as a challenging goal but also as a credo everyone should be committed to.

11 A special and comprehensive form of peace education is offered by the many Christian Peace services that train and send out volunteers to be present as living witnesses for peace and reconciliation in crisis situations of civil conflict. Well known is the work of the Christian Peace Maker Teams who have been formed since the mid-1980s by the Historic Peace Churches in the USA. Together with the Christian International Peace Services and Eirene International they belong to the larger Network of Christian Peace Organizations which also includes the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Church and Peace, Pax Christi International and other initiatives.

12 The World Council of Churches has created a similar service through the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). Each year since 2002, EAPPI has sent around 100 "ecumenical accompaniers" (EAs) from different countries to vulnerable communities in Palestine, where their task is to protect and show solidarity with the latter, and advocate on their behalf. They also accompany the Israeli Peace movement in their activities. The project co-ordinates, places, oversees and trains the EAs, and engages them together with national co-ordinators in advocacy activities upon their return to their sending countries. Through the work of the EAs and their local partners, it exposes the violence of the occupation, violations of human rights and humanitarian law, and advocates for their end. Together with the Jerusalem Interchurch Centre (JIC), EAPPI arranges international ecumenical visits to join EAs for short gatherings and solidarity actions, like observing checkpoints, gate watches at the wall, accompanying children to school etc. Creating awareness of what churches and peace groups in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel are hoping for, and encouraging more churches and partners to do advocacy that might affect their countries' foreign policy on the Middle East are other objectives of the project.

INTERCHURCH AND INTERRELIGIOUS PEACE WORKS

Interchurch Peace Work

13 Jesus prayed in his last moments of life for unity among his followers at that time and of his future followers. This has been interpreted in different ways. Some have thought that this unity should be reflected in organic or institutional unity. For others, what matters is doctrinal

unity. Still others consider that ultimately it is unity in love and respect towards other Christians and church communions that should be strived for. Yet others would add to this dimension of love and respect, unity in a shared effort to work towards the establishment of the will of God on this earth for all of creation.

This last emphasis would place the accent on interchurch unity in the proclamation and work toward what the Lord's Prayer requests: the coming of God's kingdom and the fulfilment of God's will on earth as it is fulfilled in heaven.

14 The advantage of this interpretation of Jesus' prayer is that it can bring about unity in effort and work among God's Christian family even without organic, institutional or doctrinal unity, all of which are extremely difficult to achieve. At the same time it sets aside all differences in the interest of giving testimony to Christ's reconciling work on the cross and of him as resurrected Lord and Prince of Peace for all eternity. It permits churches to work together towards God's purpose of justice and peace and in this way give a common witness not only of love and cooperation among the people of God but also of love and commitment toward a very needy world. Many churches and denominations have found it very useful to cooperate together on behalf of working toward a just peace.

15 Between 1988 and 2003 the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity of the Vatican and representatives of Mennonite World Conference gathered once a year to study, pray and discuss around the general title of "Healing of Memories." But at the end of these conversations what emerged was a document entitled "Called to Work Together for Peace." When one considers that the past consisted of fear, suspicion and hostility towards one another it is remarkable that these two church families found a common ground in work for peace on behalf of the world which God loves.

16 But there is more. In 2007 these two churches in Colombia, a country torn apart by a 40 year war between insurgent forces and the established government and characterized in the past by religious intolerance and persecution, initiated a joint project called "Building Peace through Community Transformation." The project identified 18 ongoing local church actions on behalf of their communities, nine in the Roman Catholic tradition, and nine operated by various Protestant, Evangelical and Pentecostal churches. These local church projects were seen as yeast organisms and ranged from community feeding programs to peasant organizations to community development work and similar actions. Representatives from the yeast organisms gather twice a year to receive training by resource persons and to learn from each other. These representatives in turn are committed to return to their communities and multiply the training in different peace attitudes and methodologies from leadership formation to nonviolent conflict resolution on the biblical basis of nonviolence.

These local efforts lead to the formation of social "platforms" which are organized interfaith community-based groups which gather to plan, organize and work for the transformation of their violence-ridden neighbourhoods and towns.

17 In one marginalized sector with scarce government presence, a barrio called San Nicolás, in the city of Soacha, violence and homicide was the way problems were resolved; there was recruitment for illegal armed groups, there was gang fighting and the murder of common delinquents. But the community social platform took on the name of "Peacemakers" and initiated marches for life and against violence, prayer vigils, concerts with young people and courses that sought to break the cycles of violence. The community felt empowered, began to lose their fear and impotence, the young people felt that someone paid attention to them and abandoned their gang life. The levels of violence dropped and the neighbourhood began to change.

18 As a result of this emphasis, persons from the Peacemaker platform led the way in proposing and organizing the celebration in their city of some 800,000 inhabitants, of September 21, proclaimed by the United Nations as international day of peace, nonviolence and cease fire. An interchurch and community steering committee was named. Invitations went out. A programme was organized. When the day arrived, the walk for peace stretched for blocks, led by the mayor and his wife, children from the feeding programme and church dignitaries. Behind them followed the dancing groups, the marching bands, schools and citizens.

19 Soacha has been known for its high levels of violence and homicides, gang warfare, extra-legal assassinations, drug problems, corruption. But that day the mayor backed by the churches, synagogue and Islam proclaimed that Soacha would be a territory of peace. This is an enormous step, as it involves a change of mentality, change in self-perception, and a change in understanding of what should be expected in a city that is now a peace territory. And this process is led by church people working together for a Just Peace.

20 Not only in Soacha is there a September 21 peace emphasis. Historic Protestant churches, Evangelical and Pentecostal churches in Colombia have joined together to celebrate this day. The churches decided that the UN proclamation was a perfect excuse to organize public acts that give testimony to the words of Jesus and the will of God for peace. So in

Peace is not just an abstract word. In Colombia, as the war drags on, it became clear that a lasting peace has to do with economic justice. Without economic justice there can be no real or lasting peace.

dozens of places and actions around the country, churches organize walks for peace, peace education in schools, prayer vigils, talks and discussions, concerts for peace, distribution of literature and they call on the onlookers to take up seven commitments to nonviolence in their lives.

21 But peace is not just an abstract word. In Colombia, as the war drags on, it became clear that a lasting peace has to do with economic justice. Without economic justice there can be no real or lasting peace. So the churches call the International Day of Peace, Nonviolence and Cease Fire, simply "Pan y Paz" (Bread and Peace). That day thousands of pieces of bread are handed out to surprised pedestrians to remind everyone that what we need is "more bread, fewer bullets."

22 Interchurch peace work is carried out as churches deliberately frame their mission and action under the consciousness of being Sanctuary of Peace churches. This means being a people of peace, having a message of peace, and being a place of peace. It is often dangerous to be peacemakers in a country at war. But taking a clear stand for nonviolence and announcing publicly that your church is a Sanctuary of Peace, can be a means of protection. Not that the church can't be attacked anyway (in violation of International Humanitarian Rights) but at least it has been clear in its nonviolent position and work for peace.

23 And here international solidarity by sister church relationships becomes important. Sister churches across national borders share their pilgrimage, their struggles for justice and peace, the threats and attacks against them, and prayer on each other's behalf. Visits by sister churches are important ways of making a strengthening and comforting statement concrete. The Decade to Overcome Violence Living Letters visits to different countries racked by violence, warfare and human rights abuses are interchurch actions that convey powerful messages.

24 In our countries there are different small groups that gather in "collectives" in which the participants respect their doctrinal differences and meet to study the Bible, participate in social forums, seminars, liturgies for peace and even marches and demonstrations on behalf of different topics. These include human dignity, gender issues, justice and peace, human rights, disarmament, military bases, conscientious objection, communication and conflict transformation. Adult women, men, and young people whose understanding of the faith includes openness and dialogue and a common walk participate; they consider that each person contributes and enriches the other with his/her own experience of faith. We can mention such groups as the Ecumenical Collective for Peace, the Sorority Collective, Ecumenism and Democracy, the Ecumenical Network, the Collective for Biblical Reflexion, the Commission for Life, Peace and Restoration among others. Church leaders or members of Lutheran, Presbyterian, Mennonite, Roman Catholic, Assemblies of God, Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal, Evangelical and Independent churches participate.

25 An important annotation is that cooperative peace work has been a valuable experience for the historic Protestant churches and for Roman Catholic Church. Moreover ecumenical and interchurch work has been carried out more on the informal level of grassroots believers of one or another denominational background rather than by the denominational leaders. Here, sisters and brothers move out to encounter one another, to reflect and to act together not only on the Bible but also on aspects of socio-political-economic realities illuminated by the Word of God.

Interreligious Peace Work

26 Can the world's religions be a force for peace instead of strife and warfare? Unfortunately, history provides many negative examples that would seem to deny this possibility: Christians against Muslims; Christians persecuting Jews; Muslims against Christians, Muslims against B'hais, Muslims against Jews; Hindus against Muslims; Hindus attacking Christians; Jews against Muslims, Jews against Christians; Buddhists against Hindus. The historical panorama is not very encouraging.

27 More recently we saw a Christian pastor threatening to burn the Qur'an in retaliation for the 9/11 attacks nine years earlier; and the (justifiable) fear that this action would awaken untold violence of offended Muslims against Christians. In the Indian state of Orissa, militant Hindus attacked and burned Christian churches, killed dozens of Christians, and intimidated thousands. Currently there is the constant confrontation between Jews and Muslims in Israel and Palestine. Not too encouraging.

28 And yet the great religions of the world carry a powerful potential for peace in their message and practice. All the great religions teach peace and good will. Under the spotlight of the spread of fundamentalist Islam, attention has been focused on passages of the Qur'an that espouse violence against "infidels" or non-believers. But certainly the Hebrew Bible (and Old Testament in the Christian tradition) abounds in violent language and practices against pagans (people of other religions) and "enemies." All of which suggests that followers of different religions don't have the moral authority to point fingers at others, and that holy writings

need to be interpreted critically.

29 In spite of all of this, the flame of hope and faith in the possibilities of religions uniting around the common good of humankind refuses to die out. While shrill voices of distrust and even hate rise in one part of the world, in another part of the world, leaders of various faiths gather together to pray for peace (for example, in Assisi, Italy), promote a million minutes of prayer for peace on world peace day, work together to stop warfare, and meet to talk and share in efforts to break down barriers of hostility.

30 The initiative of Pope John Paul II to invite leaders from the world's religions for the first World Day of Prayer for Peace in 1986 has since 1987 been continued by the Community of St. Egidio in organizing annually the "International Meetings – Peoples and Religions." These international meetings are inspired by the strength of peace of the religions – "weak strength" in the evangelical sense, but specifically for this reason different than the worldly strength which provokes war. Prayer is at the heart of this weak strength, in the awareness that "only peace is holy" and that the great religions must work together towards its construction in conscience as well as in public life. St. Egidio believes it is necessary to continue to make the spirit of Assisi blow in every place, facing the problematic subject of the involvement of the religions in conflicts and of the necessity that these, strengthened by mutual solidarity and friendship, may not become instruments of violence and prejudice and may not be mocked by evil.

31 The best known international organization dedicated to interreligious peace work is the World Conference of Religions for Peace, meanwhile known as "Religions for Peace – International." Founded at its first assembly in Kyoto in 1970 Religions for Peace is the largest international coalition of representatives from the world's great religions dedicated to promoting peace. Respecting religious differences while celebrating our common humanity, Religions for Peace is active on every continent and in some of the most troubled areas of the world, creating multi-religious partnerships to confront our most dire issues: stopping war, ending poverty and protecting the earth. It is based on the recognition that religious communities are the largest and best-organized civil institutions in the world, claiming the allegiance of billions across race, class, and national divides. These communities have particular cultural understandings, infrastructures and resources to get help where it is needed most.

Religions for Peace enables these communities to unleash their enormous potential for common action. Some of Religions for Peace's recent successes include building a new climate of reconciliation in Iraq; mediating dialogue among warring factions in Sierra Leone; organizing an international network of religious women's organizations; and establishing an extraordinary program to assist the millions of children affected by Africa's AIDS pandemic, the Hope for African Children Initiative.

GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY

Men and Women Together against Gender-based Violence

32 Peace needs to be tackled at all levels; home, school and community levels and in the social political set-up. The balance of power and powerlessness, pride and humiliation, always has to be discussed. Therefore both men and women do have an important role to play in promoting just peace. Women do have specific *gifts* related to this issue, and have important *experiences* that cannot be ignored on any level.

Together, men and women complement each other, and the challenges of the world have to be dealt with through interaction. Now is the time to reflect on our gender structures and gender mentality and focus on constructive behaviour.

33 The reports from the solidarity visits, *The Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988 – 98)*, focused on women as victims and were silent about their empowerment as peacemakers. But at the same time, concerning violence, the visits found that a "culture of silence" in the church prevented women from telling the full story of the violence they experience. In visit after visit these Living Letters teams found that the life and dignity of women were affected by cultures of violence in society. There is still a great work to do here. Violence against women and girls is the most widespread violations of human rights, cutting across geographical boundaries, affecting women of all ages, race, and culture. It takes place everywhere, even in the most traditionally accepted and supposedly 'safe havens' of homes, churches, on the streets, in schools, the workplace, in farm fields, refugee camps, during conflicts and crises. It has many manifestations — from the most universally prevalent forms of domestic and sexual violence, to harmful practices, abuse during pregnancy, so-called honour killings and other types of femicide. This is a challenge of women and men together. Men have to use their skills and influence to work against destructive mentality of masculinity and women have to raise their voice and tell what kind of men they want and need.

34 Women also suffer disproportionally from effect of militarized economies in which governments choose to devote scarce resources to arms and wars. When government shifts money from education to mili-

tary spending and foreign debt has been well documented: and it is women and children who suffer the most from economic and social consequences of this.[6] Military spending not only creates an economic injustice for women, it supports an "ethic" of violence against women.

35 During the *Decade to Overcome Violence 2001–2010*, though, women's skills have been more and more discovered. There is a growing need to emphasize women's contribution in peace-building, not only as victims, but as *empowered* mentors and actors.

Women in our Scriptures and Tradition

36 Deborah, Hulda, Dalila, Esther, Hannah, Miriam, Ruth, Abigail, mother Mary and Mary from Magdalene are just few examples of women in the Bible who still inspire us. Ruth used her creativity and strength to save a future for her mother-in-law and herself. Deborah was a judge: a good example of a wise person people trusted and asked for advice. The same with Hulda. Dalila used the power of Samson's love to disarm him, and Esther knew how to change the attitude of the king. Hannah showed a unique piety and the story of Abigail (1 Sam. 25:32-35) affirms that women have some skills in conflict resolution. If she had not intervened at the right moment, King David would have killed her husband and slaughtered all the sheep and goat that they had. Abigail reacted wisely and promptly, showing exemplary courage in seeking audience with the King himself, and by using language that brought out her sincerity and evoked the forgiveness of King David. Not only did she gain the goodwill of King David, the highest authority, who promised to remain the benefactor and protector, she also saved the life of her husband and his worldly possessions that had made him a rich man. Mother Mary was a young girl who got a very heavy burden and task from God. Through her, God became human in an infant child. Also Mary from Magdalene near the Sea of Galilee is an example of a woman who is disciple of Jesus. She was even the first witness of the resurrection of Christ.

37 There is need to re-examine what roles women played in the past and build on them for both a better today and a better tomorrow.

Why Women?

38 Traditionally women were assigned various roles. Chief among these was the role of child-care; giving birth and then caring for the young ones from cradle to responsible adulthood. Women therefore played the role of educators of the children, and both boys and girls have received responsible upbringing and socialization from the mothers. In this set-up, practical moral teachings were transmitted, and both sons and daughters were taught behaviour and ethos of society. Important values such as respect, honesty, uprightness, patience, self-control and compromise were all transmitted through the mother. Women were therefore peace-builders through positive child-care and through social capital transmission of values.

39 Apart from the important roles in child-care, women also have provided for their families' needs and participated in conflict mediation and conflict transformation within the family: elderly women and often also networks of women at a community level. Traditionally women's roles in peace-building may not have been loud, but they were recognized and ever so often in conflict situations, women were asked to talk to their sons especially when all other approaches seemed to have failed. Often the women's quiet diplomacy bore fruits, and the community recognized this contribution. But in modern times, women have to find the chance to speak up as they are often the forgotten voices yet they usually bear the brunt of any conflicts simply because they are women, or because they are daughters, mothers and wives of the men who are involved in the violent conflict.

40 Due to the traditional culture of quiet diplomacy, many women are still afraid to raise their voices for fear of victimization or isolation. Yet women voices need to be heard both at local, national and international levels especially within the modern day challenges of water issues, health concerns, food insecurity, economic challenges, moral disintegration and other issues of concern that affect wellness.

Practices/Stories of Women in Faith

41 "Faith" is well placed to cause positive changes in any society, due to its ability to reach a varying spectrum of people, that is, the young and the old. According to UNIFEM, "religious institutions … play key roles in gender socialization, and can act as agents of transformation…. In religious institutions, spiritual leaders can act as role models who value compassion and community building over more constraining gender roles."[7]

42 Faith-based organizations and places of worship are increasingly becoming places of solace. According to Amnesty International, "for countless women home is not a refuge but a place of terror." In this respect the church must become a place of refuge and a place of healing. However, the church has kept silent about gender-based violence. Yet some members of the congregation are victims of violence who may be hurting and in need of support. Places of worship need to create an atmosphere of openness and acceptance, as people need a place where they can be comfortable in sharing their pain. The openness of this can only be achieved if the leaders will break the silence against gender-based violence.

The church and indeed the religious institutions are uniquely placed to play a decisive role in the prevention and elimination of the different forms of violence against women and children.

43 The silence and apathy towards gender-based violence has largely been caused by the fact that many religious leaders are ignorant about where to send the survivors who may share their experience with them for further assistance either legally, in matters of health or otherwise. Yet, these are essential services that a woman or a child who has undergone any form of violence needs to ensure that holistic healing takes place.[8]

44 This is then what forms the basis of the Tamar Campaign facilitated by Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA).[9] The campaign acknowledges the existence of gender-based violence in the society, with particular focus on sexual and domestic violence and seeks to challenge and equip the Church to break the silence around this vice. Breaking the silence around gender-based violence, then breaks the cycle of violence and reduces incidences of violence. Therefore, the Tamar Campaign is an example of a bridge linking the churches with the advocates of gender-based violence issues. In addition to this, Tamar Campaign aims at being a resource centre for the church leaders equipping them to handle biblically the topic of gender-based violence.

About the Tamar Campaign

45 The Tamar Campaign acknowledges that "to respond adequately to the needs of battered women and rape survivors, it is imperative that the clergy learn about violence against women and reach out to secular advocates and services. Likewise, it is imperative that the secular advocates and counsellors appreciate the importance of women's religious backgrounds and reach out to clergy and religious groups to find resources to meet the needs of victims."[10]

46 The Campaign was launched in 2005 February, when it became increasingly evident that FECCLAHA could not continue to work in the area of peace-building in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa without seeking to address more specifically gender-based violence. This was an issue that was gravely affecting a huge portion of the population, mainly women and children in this region. Tamar Campaign in Kenya adopted the model from Ujamaa Centre in South Africa where contextual Bible Study/theological reflection has been adopted as a methodology of dealing with gender-based violence. FECCLAHA in collaboration with St. Paul's United Theological College and WCC then launched the Tamar Campaign. The Campaign's vision is a continent free from sexual and domestic violence, in which men and women relate as equal partners made in God's image. In addition, the Campaign's mission is to demonstrate God's compassion and justice to women and children who suffer indignity and violation through sexual and domestic violence.

47 What makes the Tamar Campaign faith-based is use of the scriptures; the guiding principles of the faith to react to the high numbers of human rights violations experienced. The Tamar Campaign is developed from a story in the Bible of the incestuous rape of Tamar (2 Sam. 13:1-22), the text is a hair-rising narrative that describes only too accurately much of the dynamics of sexual violence experienced by women across the world. This is not only a text about gender violence; it is also a text about the failure of family and governmental structures to protect women and about the effects of gender violence on other aspects of life. An issue that stands out in the story of Tamar is silence of the survivor and the impunity…. The survivor is denied justice by the systems that be – this same pattern is replicated in many conflict, post-conflict and even countries in peaceful situations.

48 Churches and faith based organizations comprehensively addressing GBV will publicly speak out against GBV and engage governments in combating GBV, they will put in place polices against GBV and other forms of violence, develop programs with a GBV focus and make the link between GBV & HIV and AIDS within these programs. The use of scripture to address issues of GBV and particularly the incestuous rape of Tamar enables readers to engage with issues such as the silencing of women who have been raped, the cultural determinants of sexual violence within communities and the impunity that surrounds sexual violence. The Tamar narrative also helps participants to study African cultures and religion alongside the Bible which have been used negatively but, if well articulated, have liberating messages just like the Bible.

49 The church and indeed the religious institutions are uniquely placed to play a decisive role in the prevention and elimination of the different forms of violence against women and children. They have the clout and the capacity to minister to the needs of those who have been abused as well as those who are perpetrators. The church and these other religious institutions can provide opportunities for healing of the victims for example by providing emotional and spiritual support, counselling and shelter. This would complement the efforts of hospitals, civil society organizations and the police. They can also provide sanctions and deterrent measures for perpetrators for example by holding them accountable for their deeds. The faith institutions can play a pro-active role through its

preaching and teaching about the evil of gender-based violence, thereby setting standards for societal values that protect the well-being of women and children.

50 The church has to be a good example and look at its own structure and traditional patriarchy. It is also important that women get the chance to use their own expressions and behaviour. Differences in communication and attitude must be recognized as a resource. It is said that women in the army change the army, but research rather makes it clear that the army changes the girls to become more like their male colleagues.

Liberian Women Peacemakers

51 An interesting example is from the women's peace movement in Liberia, brilliantly documented in a film titled "Pray the Devil Back to Hell." This brings out some of the most interesting and inspiring steps women have taken to create and maintain peace within Africa and their initiatives in post-conflict rebuilding. It is the extraordinary story of a small band of Christian and Muslim Liberian women who came together to stop a bloody 14-year civil war between rebel groups and the Liberian army. After years of endless fighting, for the first time in the country's history, a group of ordinary women, both Christian and Muslim, came together for a common cause. They sang and prayed in a city square for days trying to get the attention of President Charles Taylor. They took on the violent warlords and corrupt Charles Taylor regime, and won a long-awaited peace for their shattered country in 2003. As the rebel noose tightened upon Monrovia, and peace talks faced collapse, the Christian and Muslim women of Liberia, armed only with white T-shirts and the courage of their convictions formed a thin but unshakable white line between the opposing forces, and successfully demanded an end to the fighting. They barricaded the site of stalled peace talks in Ghana and announced they would not move until a deal was done. Faced with eviction, they invoked the most powerful weapon in their arsenal – threatening to remove their clothes. It worked. Voluntary nudity from an older mother-like figure in Liberia is the greatest of offenses. The women threatened the men by saying that if they did not finish in two weeks, they will bring thousands of women to the talks. Two weeks later the peace talks concluded. Once the war ended the women of Liberia continued their work by campaigning and getting Liberians to register to vote. A woman was later elected the first female head of state in an African nation. The women of Liberia are living proof that "moral courage and nonviolent resistance can succeed, even where the best efforts of traditional diplomacy have failed." *Inspiring, uplifting, and most of all motivating, this story is a compelling testimony of how grassroots activism can alter the history of nations.* They continue to focus on healing and rehabilitating women and girls, mending broken relationships between survivors and offenders of the civil war, and increasing the number of women involved in post-war peace-building and reconstruction.

52 Some of the leaders of this movement are *Vaiba Flomo*, who, working with the Lutheran church's trauma healing program, brought faith groups together with the message: "Does the bullet know Christian from Muslim?" and *Leymah Gbowee*, who joined the Woman in Peace-building Network WIPNET, brought women of Christian Churches together into the Christian Women's Initiative and then formed a coalition with the women in the Muslim organizations in Monrovia and eventually Liberian Mass Action for Peace came into being.

53 As women continue to involve in peace movements and prove that they are not just vulnerable but necessary components in peacekeeping efforts and post-conflict rebuilding, there is hope that there will be a more resilient and safer world.

Columbia and Women Peacemakers

54 For decades, Colombia has suffered through an ongoing civil war in which countless innocent civilians have perished in the fighting and its accompanying war on drugs. Though there have been noteworthy developments in recent years in Colombia's conflict situation, the peace processes are stalled and violence continues to escalate throughout the country as demobilized paramilitary disturb local communities.

55 The Catholic Church and Protestant churches have been involved in efforts to bring peace to the beleaguered country. Women from the Catholic and Protestant communities have also been operating in the midst of some of the most conflict-ridden parts of the country in order to bring humanitarian assistance and empowerment to the displaced and victims of conflict. These women, working through local churches, their religious orders, or faith-based organizations, often have a sophisticated understanding of conflict dynamics and have been able to create effective local programs to build pockets of peace and justice.

Many women's groups in Colombia use the UN Security Council Resolutions relating to women's roles in peace-building and peace-making (resolutions 1325, 1820, and 1880 in particular) to educate the public about women's contributions in this realm, to equip women to participate in future peace talks in Colombia, and to ensure women's political representation in governance.

Women Peacemakers in Congo

56 The Democratic Republic of Congo has rich deposits of diamonds, gold, cobalt, timber, and other natural resources. It also contains 85 percent of the world's coltan ore from which is derived the element Tantalum, which is essential to the manufacture of laptop computers and cell phones. Intentional destabilization by vested interests prevents Congo from being at peace and gaining control over its resources. Since 1996, nearly four million people have died in Congo from a conflict that has involved several rebel armies, the militaries of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Namibia, Angola and their proxy militias. The armed groups and the official Congolese army have shifted alliances, split apart and regrouped under other names, but they all have important aspects in common: they target civilians and they all use rape as a weapon of war.

57 Congolese churches and civic groups have attempted to provide medical care, counselling, and job training for the rape survivors, but they are overwhelmed by the staggering numbers of raped and displaced women. Girls, some as young as eighteen months, are raped by neighbours, brothers, taxi drivers and teachers. Christian organizations have responded by training 36,000 children to resist rapes and teaching parents never to let their daughters go anywhere alone or be alone with a man, even a teacher.

58 The use of rape as a weapon of war has had broader ramifications for the people of eastern Congo. Since armed groups often attack women when they are working in the fields, many women are afraid to leave their homes. Thus, in fertile lands with a year-round growing season, people in the country are beginning to go hungry.

Women Peacemakers in Nepal

59 In the Nepal Initiative, women were absolutely essential. When the King took over the country in February 2005 and ended belief in a constitutional monarchy, Nepal essentially disappeared off the world screen. All communications were cut off for 10 days. The following year changed the future as literally thousands and thousands of people took to the streets in nonviolent protest as they had done once in the late 1980s to secure a *more* democratic government. *And in this process, it was the women who were the bravest and took many risks. They went straight up to the soldiers, saying: "You are my son, why are you behaving this way?"*

As none of the parties had included women in their leadership, some of the missing voices came from the women on the streets. Overall the women continued to be instrumental in trying to get that voice that could lead to a more just peace, one that could deal with the fractious caste and class divisions that excluded so much of the population and left root causes of conflict unaddressed. They helped to break the barriers and bring in the voices of the survivors from outside Kathmandu into the power centre.[11]

Challenges

60 The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, in Argentina, are an example of how the women use their strength and experiences as mothers to put pressure on the policy of the government. This method is very unique for women. On the other hand history is full of examples of how women are participating in the traditionally male activities as militarization. We also know how, for example, Hitler and Pinochet mobilized women to support their regimes by appeals to "defence of the family."

61 Thus some feminists are critical of building a peace movement on women's identity as mothers. Women play many roles in society and justification based on biology reinforces patriarchy. A common attitude is that women in the army change the army, but research rather makes it clear that the army changes the girls to become more like their male colleagues. The issue is complex. Women are not a monolithic bloc: they are divided by class, race, culture and life experiences. Not all women are nurturing, peace-loving and anti-war; just as not all men are militaristic war-mongers. Generalizations are impossible. Yet sometimes the connections pop up in the most unexpected places.[12] We see examples of mothers who have experienced physical or psychological violence in their own childhood also may practice the same behaviour on their children.

62 Unfortunately women have throughout history been an exposed group in society. There are too many examples on how they have physically and psychologically been abused to the fullest, in all levels of society, and all from domestic to international conflicts. Also men experience sexual violence, especially in all-male contexts such as prisons, but it thus seems that violence like rape affects women exclusively. The church has a responsibility to protect and has to play a role as a sanctuary.

63 Most forms of physical violence are done by men and can be considered to be related to gender – whether men's violence against women or men's violence against other men. Even self-directed violence may have a gender dimension: some accounts of men's suicide attempts suggest that men commit or attempt suicide when they feel they are not able to live up to the mandates or societal demands of being real men[13]. In countries characterized by violence, war or high levels of gun possession, older men may give young men guns as part of a rite de passage from boyhood into manhood.[14] It has to be put under the spot that also men often are victims and actors at the same time.

Where Do We Go from Here?

64 The UN Security Council now recognizes that women's exclusion from peace processes contravenes their rights and that including women and gender perspectives in decision-making can strengthen prospects for sustainable peace. This recognition was formalized in October 2000 with the unanimous adoption of Resolution 1325 on *women, peace and security*. The landmark resolution specifically addresses the situation of women in armed conflict and calls for their participation at all levels of decision-making on conflict resolution and peace-building.

Since the agenda was set with the core principles of resolution 1325, three supporting resolutions have been adopted by the Security Council — 1820, 1888 and 1889.The four resolutions focus on two key goals:

A. Strengthening women's participation in decision-making—

Resolution 1325 (2000) calls for strengthening women's agency as peacemakers and peace builders, including their participation in conflict prevention and peace processes, early recovery, governance and in peace operations. Resolution 1889 (2009) complements 1325 by calling for the establishment of global indicators to measure progress on its implementation.

B. Ending sexual violence and impunity —

Resolution 1820 (2008) calls for an end to widespread conflict-related sexual violence and for accountability in order to end impunity. Resolution 1888 (2009) focuses on strengthening leadership, expertise and other institutional capacities within the United Nations and in member states to help put an end to conflict-related sexual violence.

Together, these resolutions provide a powerful framework and mandate for implementing and measuring change in conflict-affected societies. The United Nations has, in fact, detailed the ways in which women can contribute in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations, which if implemented and monitored properly, will usher in a new era of peace.

65 UNIFEM observes that all problems and practices point to paying lip service to UNSCR 1325 and 1820, and unless there is a paradigm shift, we will have little tangible results in the next decade too. There is only a very few countries that have started making action plans. Till now these plans are also lacking concretization.

66 Problems of implementing UNSCR 1325 are at all levels and include: limited appreciation of the contribution that women do make to peace processes because they are often informal initiatives; the design of peace negotiations favours representation based on the power of the gun; limited knowledge of the contents of the resolution, limited participation of women in development of action plans; limited presence of women in peace operations; limited skills in understanding of security issues and for increased participation in post conflict action plans.

A combination of the spiritual, legal, psychological, and health support goes a long way in aiding the holistic healing of a violated survivor.

67 There are some churches that have started though. The mentioned churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa have recognized the need to address 1820 gender-based violence through the TAMAR campaign movement and have organized awareness raising workshops on 1325. The ecumenical movement has the obligation to increase its literacy on 1325 and subsequently advocacy to state domestication and implementation of the resolution.

68 The modern woman in developing countries is faced with various challenges which are both economic and social. There are now problems associated with the disintegration of the traditional networks as women take on new roles and yet continue to be excluded from socio-economically viable positions in the society. Women have to constantly rise to the occasion and question this exclusion yet traditionally they played a crucial role which was recognized. It is a fact that if, for example, African countries are surviving economic crisis, it is largely due to the ingenuity of women who are fulfilling their roles as well as those of the men who are away or caught up conflict. Women have innate qualities which in the modern days are not fully tapped in peace-building processes including conflict prevention and resolution and modern countries can no longer afford to exclude women in peace processes.

69 Apathy and hush tones regarding matters of gender-based violence within the family; the church and other institutions in the society often encourage violence against women and children. A combination of the spiritual, legal, psychological, and health support goes a long way in aiding the holistic healing of a violated survivor. The church should emphasize on the kind of education (spiritual, religious and moral) that retains Christian values, promotes religious diversity and teaches peace and respect for human rights, with priority given to girls and grass-root women. We should also emphasis on documentation that highlights women's contribution to interfaith collaboration for peace in an empowering manner and not manipulatively.

70 After the learning from the *Decade in Solidarity with Women*, and the during the ten years of UNSCR 1325, the focus is now no longer women in isolation, but rather on the interaction between the genders. The role of the church is to make sure that both women and men together look at the gender patterns, both masculinity and femininity, to make sure that gender roles are developed in a healthy way for the best of society.

INDIGENOUS MATTERS

It Matters

71 The title for this section, "Indigenous matters," aims to provoke the thinking and commitment of readers of this *Companion*. It is important to stress here that thinking of and reflecting on *indigenous matters* are necessary, but not enough. Appropriate and responsible actions are also required, from individuals, churches and communities. There are two ways in which *indigenous matters* may be understood:

72 First, the title of this section invites readers to affirm the significance of indigenous peoples, practices and values – *they matter*. We should live, talk, think and interact in ways that affirm the importance of indigenous people. This calls upon us all to be especially conscious of our personal and collective biases against indigenous people. For instance, we should guard our minds and lips from thinking or speaking of indigenous people as if they are not wise, and as if they are only beneficiaries of charities. Indigenous people are keepers of wisdom traditions that go back hundreds and thousands of years. The Yothu Yindi song titled *"Gone is the land"* (*Garma*, 2000) hits the mark on the head of this matter: "This land is not 40,000 dollars or more, but 40,000 years of cultures here." Indigenous peoples throughout the world live on lands whose values are not based on dollar signs, but on cultures and memories. Consequently, we should not relate to indigenous people according to "market economy" but according to "economy of cultures."

73 This section is therefore a reminder of the rich cultures that indigenous people the world over hold. There is no time more crucial for learning and embracing this richness than the present time, as the effects of climate change threaten the creation and life in general. Indigenous people have lived responsively with creation for many generations, learning to listen, adapt and survive crises and abundances for many generations. Indigenous people in different parts of the world have different ways of living and diverse circles of wisdom teachings, of course, and it would be wise not to try to stereotype them but to seek them out in their different settings. Readers will find that indigenous people are not far from where they are, whether in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia or Oceania, and that they have much wisdom. Indigenous people are everywhere, and they matter!

74 Second, the title indicates that this section privileges the matters, the concerns and interests, of indigenous people. There is no time more crucial for this attention then now, for indigenous people have made the least contribution to the world's carbon collection but they suffer the most from the blisters of global warming. This is most suffocating in smaller island nations, especially in the Pacific and Caribbean oceans, and the Bay of Bengal. Hectares of land have been washed away from islands, and islanders are being relocated, most recently from Lohachara and Ghoramara at the Bay of Bengal, Carteret in Papua New Guinea, and many more are waiting for their turn (Tuvalu, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall, St. Andres and more). As they are moved, their lands and the roots of their identities abandoned, the wisdom and ways of their ancestors will in time be lost. They too are victims of the carbon civilization.

75 This section is therefore a call for accountability toward indigenous people, customs and cultures. *We should no longer be deaf, blind and dumb when it comes to indigenous matters.*

Christian Churches and Indigenous Peoples

76 Since its inception, one might argue, the Christian Church existed and worked among indigenous peoples. Whether among the First Nations in North and South America, the Adivasis in India, or among the colourful tribes in Asia and Africa, Christian churches have survived because of indigenous people.

77 Unfortunately, Christian churches, for the most part, especially in the early days, participated in the so-called war of *Christ over culture*. This is the assumption that the message and ways of Christ are preferred over against other human teachings and cultures, so the whole of humanity needed to be converted, sometimes by means of persecution, to the culture of Christ. In this war of cultures, indigenous peoples are seen as pagans whose ways needed to be exorcised and cast away. Christian churches marched out as if they were hosts of saints sent forth to save the pagan world. For centuries, as a consequence, indigenous peoples and their customs were unfairly demonized and ostracized.

78 From the perspective of indigenous matters, the Christ over culture wars were fought across colour lines, because Western Christian churches were predominantly white while the indigenous peoples were shades darker, brown, coloured and black. The unconsciousness of the Christian churches to its "whiteness" raised in later years the question whether God

is colour-blind, or as colour-blind as the church. This charge is open for debate, but as far as indigenous matters go, the issues of colour and race can no longer be sidestepped.

79 Christian churches remain, notwithstanding, the most fertile grounds for the seeds of indigenous matters. Christian churches are, so to speak, on the ground with indigenous peoples and they can continue to work with grass-root peoples.

80 Christian churches are invited to rethink and mend their ways especially in relation to indigenous peoples. This invitation is most urgent now, as younger generations of people, indigenous and non-indigenous, are becoming bored and disillusioned by the purposes and practices of Christian churches.

82 *Will there be a time when Christian churches cease its drive to convert indigenous people long enough to learn and embrace, and be delivered by, indigenous matters?*

WCC and Indigenous Matters

83 The World Council of Churches is among the leaders in calling attention to indigenous matters. It does this, first of all, by recognizing the burden that has befallen indigenous people. On the WCC website is the following statement of solidarity (cited December 11, 2010):

Indigenous peoples in many parts of the world have always faced discrimination, exclusion and even threats to their survival as peoples. The WCC has been their committed and consistent partner. It has stood in solidarity with them in their struggles for land, identity, language, survival of indigenous cultures and self-determination.

84 The WCC works in many ways to manifest its solidarity with indigenous people, through workshops, conferences, statements, aids and so forth. For further information on the work of WCC, see: http://www.oikoumene.org/en/programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/just-and-inclusive-communities/indigenous-peoples.html

CWM and indigenous matters

85 The Council for World Mission also works very closely on indigenous matters, through its many projects and mission. CWM continues to send teachers and workers to the peripheries where indigenous people exist, and its *Oikotree* project (http://www.oikotree.org) is committed to the interests and wisdom of indigenous peoples.

For further information on the work of CWM, see http://www.cwmission.org/.

United Church of Canada and Indigenous Matters

86 One of the churches committed to indigenous matters is the United Church of Canada, which has issued this statement on its official website (cited December 12, 2010):

The United Church of Canada is committed to seeking right relationships with Aboriginal Peoples and to support First Nations in their struggle for self-government and Aboriginal rights.

87 It is worth registering here that, through the Rt. Rev. Robert Smith in 1986, the UCC issued an apology, which deserves being quoted in full (cited December 12, 2010):

Long before my people journeyed to this land your people were here, and you received from your Elders an understanding of creation and of the Mystery that surrounds us all that was deep, and rich, and to be treasured.

We did not hear you when you shared your vision. In our zeal to tell you of the good news of Jesus Christ we were closed to the value of your spirituality.

We confused Western ways and culture with the depth and breadth and length and height of the gospel of Christ.

We imposed our civilization as a condition for accepting the gospel.

We tried to make you be like us and in so doing we helped to destroy the vision that made you what you were. As a result you, and we, are poorer and the image of the Creator in us is twisted, blurred, and we are not what we are meant by God to be.

We ask you to forgive us and to walk together with us in the Spirit of Christ so that our peoples may be blessed and God's creation healed.

For further information on the work of UCC on indigenous matters, see http://www.united-church.ca/aboriginal.

Uniting Church in Australia and Indigenous Matters

88 Along similar lines, the Uniting Church in Australia (http://www.uca.org.au) works through the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (http://www.uaicc.org.au) to highlight the need to attend to, and be transformed because of, indigenous matters.

89 One of the recent developments in the work of the UCA is the proposal at the 2009 Assembly of a new Preamble to its Constitution. The proposed Preamble acknowledges the presence of Aborigines as First peoples, with their rich religiosities, prior to the arrival of the First Fleet, and seeks to heal the hurt caused by the arrival of the Christian mission to Australia (recognizing that Christianity arrived alongside Colonization). The proposed Preamble may be accessed online at http://assembly.uca.org.au/images/stories/resources/0909preambleqafinal.pdf

Lest We Forget

90 Christian churches in different parts of the world have different programs and ways of interacting with indigenous peoples and indigenous matters. This short section can't name all of those, but lifted up the above examples in order to highlight the need for intentional attention to indigenous matters.

91 Christian churches have also benefited from the leadership of indigenous peoples, as teachers, ministers, healers, administrators, and so forth, both as lay and ordained people. Their gifts are welcomed, and may future generations continue to be welcomed.

Just Peace and indigenous matters

92 To travel the way of Just Peace without attending to indigenous matters would be like passing a victim on the side of the road without stopping to give a hand. Who will be the neighbour for that person? Who will be the neighbour for indigenous peoples?

93 May we be inspired to attend to, and work for, individually and communally, indigenous peoples and indigenous matters. And may we, together, always remember that indigenous peoples, cultures and customs are included when we pray ... *"May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven ..."*

FROM ISSUES TO PRACTICES

The International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, held in Jamaica in May 2011, brought together more than a thousand people from all over the world, cutting across geographical boundaries, church affiliations and cultural and ethnic diversities. They came to deliberate, to learn and to celebrate the challenges inherent in concept of a Just Peace. The convocation served as an opportunity to listen to each other's stories of suffering and sorrow, struggles and success in making and building peace. Daily Bible studies, songs, presentations, seminars and a wide range of "reasoning workshops" enabled the participants to learn from real-life experiences and to gain rare insights into what churches, NGOs and other organizations are actually doing to promote Just Peace. The IEPC served as unique exercise in peace education. For many participants it set the compass for the journey of hope toward peace in a troubled world.

Detailed below are some of the reasoning workshops conducted at the IEPC as examples of the work being done under the four themes of Just Peace identified in the Ecumenical Call to Just Peace.

Peace in the Community

1 ***Being a Church of Peace.*** The workshop on The Gospel of Peace in a Political Revolution was an intergenerational dialogue to assess the impact of the German churches and the ecumenical movement on the peaceful revolution in the German Democratic Republic in 1989 and its relevance today. It also explored ideas for developing a theology of peace and for encouraging churches to rediscover their mission to be the leaven of peace.

Context. The ecumenical movement in Germany has been a key element and actor in political change. Several ecumenical meetings of the churches in the GDR in 1988-89, especially the Ecumenical Assembly on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, focused on the churches' social and political agenda for political liberalization. The church served as a defender of German unity. It has been an advocate on issues of peace, human rights, and the environment and a training ground in democracy. The churches' call for Keine Gewalt (No Violence) had a lasting impact in the period leading up to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Theological reflections. The biblical concept of shalom was identified as a fundamental orientation and inspiration for God's people and a source of spirituality and hope for generations of Christians, in the pursuit of peace with justice. The challenge is to be a church of peace by rediscovering, redefining and affirming the churches' role not only to advocate peace but practice and teach peace.

Recommendations. Church leaders and members should reaffirm the churches' role and their own responsibilities in promoting peace. They should be continuously engaged in peacebuilding and peace education, to walk in solidarity with the oppressed and to challenge the perpetrators of injustice.

2 ***Peace-Training Programs for Young People.*** The workshop on Building Cultures of Peace was intended to create awareness that edu-

cating young people in peacebuilding and conflict resolution leads to transformation. This is an effective method for addressing violence and fostering peace in communities. Training programs like Youth Becoming Peacemakers and Peacemakers: Youth with a Peace Mission – in German churches (Hesse and Nassau) and in Ghana (Presbyterian Church of Ghana) are examples. Youth leaders are taught to handle conflict situations in a nonviolent manner. By involving youth in creating peaceful communities and in nurturing a culture of peace, churches themselves become agents of peace.

Theological reflections. The biblical visions of Just Peace and of a New Creation are sources of hope for change. This vision encourages the churches to continue to work for peace and to invite all people of goodwill to follow the call to "Seek peace, and pursue it" (Ps. 34: 14).

Training Modules. Training is done through activities, games, dramas and creative arts that relate to real-life situations. It includes discussions and debates so that young people make their own decisions, arrive at conclusions and formulate their own definitions and solutions to conflictual situations. Training through games and mock scenarios can teach lessons that are remembered. Training with peers can help participants accept the program, appreciate what is at stake and assume some collective responsibility. Youth learn the need to cooperate and to think and react differently when in conflict. Attitudinal changes—that is, learning to think differently, to mediate and intervene differently—trigger a thought process that acknowledges the need to deal with others on the basis of respect, love, understanding and the desire for peace. Youth are encouraged to respect individuals, their opinions and viewpoints, especially in multiethnic, multi-religious situations, and to love one's neighbour unconditionally.

Challenges include:

- To urge the churches and the community to nurture peace through similar programs for the young
- To engage Christian educational institutions and all other forms of formal and informal education in the continuing process of inculcating values of peace and skills of conflict transformation
- To channel energies of the young into useful activities, such as formation of clubs and peace societies, and other activities in the pursuit of peace
- For the churches and educators to be role models who "walk the talk"
- To involve the young in community welfare projects

- To involve the young in mediation and intervention processes undertaken in real-life situations
- To encourage the young to train and mentor other young people in peacebuilding.

3 ***Local to Global Protection.*** The ongoing project Local to Global Protection – initiated by the DanChurchAid and the Church of Sweden's aid agencies in 2009 – explores how people living in areas affected by armed conflict, political violence, unrest and natural disasters understand community-based "protection" of civilians. The workshop explored the basis for such protection under international frameworks such as the Responsibility to Protect and international humanitarian law. The workshop described community-oriented research and interviews carried out in Karen State and the Irrawaddy Delta of Myanmar, in Southern Kordofan and Joglei State in Sudan, and in Harare, Mashonaland East and Matabela Land in Zimbabwe. The research also examined how affected populations perceive the roles of NGOs, civil society and non-state actors in relation to "protection."

Challenges identified in the research include:

- Educating and empowering victims to deal humanitarian issues, so that they are aware of international law that guarantees their rights to survival and protection
- Ensuring that all humanitarian aid is offered on the basis of what is necessary and culturally right for the recipients, rather than predetermined packages that do not cater to their needs
- Tapping into the resilience and courage of women to rejuvenate communities psychologically, economically and spiritually
- Churches advocating against the "marketing" of humanitarian aid because human dignity and human life are not commodities that can be traded. A model code of conduct or work ethics should be developed for aid agencies to prevent exploitation of people in need and exaggeration of local realities in the endeavor to brand one's work, do well in the "market" and get funding.

4 ***Local Empowerment for Just Peace.*** The WCC convocation in Seoul in 1990 recommended an ecumenical program "to develop and coordinate justice and peace ministries including a global nonviolent service which can advance the struggle for human rights and liberation and serve in conflicts, crisis and violence." This workshop on "Empowerment for a Just Peace" offered an opportunity for continued planning and discussion

around how best to enable local people to prevent escalation of conflicts and be agents for nonviolent change. The workshop focused specifically on the role of local churches and ministries, for example:

- To explore how the WCC and its member churches can empower local people to prevent escalation of conflicts and be agents for nonviolent change
- To develop a theological basis for programs of nonviolence
- To call on the ecumenical movement to develop and implement practical programs of conflict prevention
- To emphasize that peace education – in all its dimensions – should be an essential element to enable local people in conflict areas to prevent escalation of conflicts and to be agents of social change.

Recommendations. The workshop issued its own call to churches to reaffirm and abide by the ecumenical convocation in Seoul. The Just Peace Companion lists a number of types and functions of justice and peace ministries, including a global nonviolent service that was recommended at the Seoul convocation in these terms:

To be present in places where peace is endangered; to be God's ambassadors of reconciliation; to mediate in situations of conflict; to restore life and dignity to the victims of violence; to break the cycle of violence by transforming conflict; to re-establish right relationships in community; to support and strengthen the "rule of law"; and to bring together the work on gender and racism, human rights and transformation of conflict in ways that engage the churches in initiatives for reconciliation.

5 ***Models of Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Theological Education as a Contribution to Peacebuilding: An Inter-Regional Dialogue.*** Two workshops showed that inter-faith dialogue is an intrinsic component of the peacebuilding process. There is no peace among nations – and within nations – without peace among religions. The dialogue between Muslims and Christians is vast, complex, and has undergone significant changes in the last century. Four models of dialogue were highlighted (based on the WCC document "Challenges and Opportunities in Theological Education in the 21st century"):

- The dialogue of life, where people naturally relate to each other across religious boundaries in the course of their daily lives
- Social dialogue, where people of various faiths collaborate with one another in the cause of peace and justice
- Intellectual dialogue, where people can explore different beliefs and their claims to truth
- Spiritual dialogue, where people open themselves to the force of another's religious experiences.

The requirements for such dialogues include:

- Engagement by churches in the appropriate kind of dialogue
- More in-depth study of each other's scriptures in order to build mutual understanding, overcome differences and discover common ground
- Development of resources for Christian-Muslim dialogue in theological education (see, for example, the Anglican Church resources on the Christian Muslim Forum website)
- Healing of historical wounds and conflicts between Christians and Muslims remains a vital task for churches in the Middle East and beyond.
- Development of a pastoral theology that would be effective in an intercultural and interfaith setting.

Recommendations include:

- Forming a global platform for Christians and Muslims in theological education to exchange of resources and curriculum models
- Developing common resources for educating pastors and imams for interfaith dialogue as part of a new working agenda of WCC in this area (a proposal made by the WCC Conference of Christian and Muslim leaders in November 2010)
- Mediation and the healing of memories are vital and urgent needs in areas where tensions and conflicts prevail
- Sharing resources for interfaith learning in theological education is one key dimension of the newly created Global Digital Library for Theology and Ecumenism. There is an urgent appeal to make available more resources from Christian-Muslim dialogue for this library.

6 ***Accompaniment: A Model of Peacemaking***. The purpose of the workshop was to stimulate thinking about accompaniment as a Christian practice for peacemaking in the "dialogue of knowledge" tradition. The workshop used testimonies from Colombia as an example. Participants

were invited to imagine and propose how accompaniment might be developed or taken up by the church in different contexts as a way of seeking Just Peace. The workshop addressed issues such as nonviolent direct action, international collaboration and the continuing violence in Colombia. It was based on the shared experience of the Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship and the Colombia Accompaniment Program initiated in 2004.

Recommendations: The group urged Christians and Christian churches to explore the possibility and need for strengthening the accompaniment program in Colombia on the lines of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme for Palestine and Israel. It also urged church advocacy and action, especially against US military aid given to Colombia.

7 ***Healing of Memories***. The need for healing and reconciliation is widespread. The pain and burden of memories--of ongoing, recent and past conflicts--haunt and hamper normal life and progress. This workshop introduced an experiential program to train facilitators to advocate, develop and promote healing of memories and other healing and reconciliation processes in churches and faith communities. Those who are trained can serve as channels of hope and recovery for others.

The training orients healing of memories toward emotional and personal responses rather than intellectual and rational responses. Participants are helped to confront the sources of alienation, misunderstanding and personal suffering they have experienced. The training is based on the premise that those who would be healers of others must be on their own journey of healing.

The workshop brought to light:

- The relationship between collective journeys of nations and social groups and individual journeys of a psychological, emotional and spiritual nature
- How identifying sources of alienation promotes theological and ethical dialogue about alienation and related issues
- The fact that experiences of parents and grandparents may affect future generations
- Faith communities can play both negative and positive roles in the lives of people
- The destructive role of hatred and the ambivalent role of anger in our lives – neither of which bring life-giving feelings
- The importance of safe and sacred spaces where stories can be received and believed without being judged.

Recommendations. The group formulated these key ideas:

- Healing of memories is a key component for building Just Peace
- The WCC should encourage healing of memories processes in local contexts for healing of communities
- Creating interreligious events to commemorate September 11 annually is a possibility
- Peace with self should be an element of future WCC programmes in this area.

8 ***Reflecting on Peace Processes.*** The workshop shared the experiences and lessons learned from peace processes since 1999 by faith communities, non-governmenatal agencies, governments and the United Nations. By analysing these experiences through 26 case studies and consultations with over 1,000 practitioners, the initiative was able to clarify why some projects work and others do not. This workshop also introduced an accountability model or tool for evaluating various peace processes and sharing the core findings.

Findings. Analyzing on-the-ground realities with the accountability tool showed the following:

- To be effective, peacebuilding processes should be at the macro level, looking at the larger framework of society
- Timeframes cannot be set for peacebuilding programs, as they are ongoing and might take years. Yet donors are not comfortable with long-term projects and delayed outcomes. “Projectization” of peace process should be avoided
- Engaging both “more people” and “key people” for projects. Seeing church as key people, and community as more people enables an inter-relatedness and interaction among the community, the key players and the people affected.
- It is important to get media to report responsibly. This requires coverage not only of conflict and negative aspects but also reports on peace initiatives by the community, churches and other faith-based organizations
- The importance of engaging churches in recovery, rehabilitation, and rebuilding activitie.
- Study and use tools that assist in creating benchmarks to guide peace projects forward.

9 ***Women, Peace and Security – A Roadmap to UN Resolution 132***. This workshop aimed at raising awareness and discussing the role of women in peacebuilding, as well as introducing a Swedish model of training in three steps to be a peace agent. United Nation's Security Council Resolution 1325, the first UN resolution on women, peace and security, was unanimously adopted on 31 October 2000. For the first time the Security Council addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women. The resolution recognized the under-valued and under-utilized contributions that women make to preventing conflict, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building. It also stressed the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security. The resolution clearly points to the fact that women's participation and power in processes for peace and security are not a "gender issue" but a prerequisite for sustainable peace and human security.

The workshop stressed:

- The importance of different actors coming together in mutual understanding
- That sustainable Just Peace and human security cannot be achieved without the full participation of both women and men in decision-making processes for conflict prevention and conflict resolution at local, national and international levels
- That it is vital to empower women as peace agents through capacity building, training and encounters, as well as by preparing them to undertake positions at negotiation tables
- Women need to organize themselves and create alliances among themselves.

Recommendations. The group recommended that churches and church bodies:

- Include Resolution 1325 in programming on human rights and peacebuilding
- Empower and encourage women within the churches to participate in peacebuilding locally, nationally and internationally
- Empower women to form alliances that study, publicize and monitor implementation of Resolution 1325.

Peace with the Earth

1 ***After the Catastrophe of the Nuclear Meltdown in Japan.*** Organized by the Japanese Catholic Council for Justice and Peace in light of the nuclear power plant disaster at Fukushima,Japan, the workshop was a cry for complete abolition not only of nuclear power plants but also of the unjust systems behind nuclear energy production. Participants heard that nuclear power plants are based on hiding the truth about high-level risk and damage to life and property. People are bound to what the workshop called nuclear "slavery." The primary beneficiaries of the system are the national power authorities and their associated industries. The Fukushima incident is not a natural disaster but a fully manmade one. The workshop leader called it "one of the worst catastrophes in the history of the world." The workshop mantra was "awareness-building and nothing but the truth."

Challenges and recommendations:

- That churches educate people about the risks and dangers involved in setting up nuclear plants and where they are located
- That churches hold up Chernobyl and Fukushima as constant reminders of the dangers of living under or after a nuclear meltdown, and the permanent threat that these sites will present for generations to come
- That concerned churches call for a resolution or statement by the WCC urging total abolition of nuclear power plants.

2 ***Bringing Together*** *Ubuntu* ***and*** *Sangsaeng.* When civilizations are confronted by destructive forces that destroy life, they are compelled to explore the possibility of countervailing, life-giving forces that affirm relationships, promote harmonious co-existence with creation, and engender solidarity with those who struggle for justice. The workshop introduced key African and Asian concepts of holistic and harmonious living, important tools for a spirituality and theology of peace with the earth. Ubuntu is an African expression of people living in harmony with the whole of creation. Sangsaeng is an ancient Asian concept "of a sharing community and an economy which allows all to flourish together." It suggests a profound earth-embracing vision in which God descends from heaven to earth to live with humans in a renewed paradise (see Rev. 21-22). In these two worldviews, God and creation form a seamless whole in which the continued existence of God, human beings and the earth are interconnected. When earth and humans suffer, God suffers, too.

Challenges. The churches are challenged to:

- Take a bold stand against the forces of death and destruction
- Adopt an eco-praxis of care, tending creation and building communities of Just Peace
- Be partners in God's mission
- Be signs of hope (Rom. 8:18).

Peace in the Marketplace

1 ***Building Human Security through the Economics and Economies of Care.*** The workshop highlighted the interconnectedness of war, famine, lack of political leadership, and how these affect the lives of common people, harming women and children in particular. Stories from the Bible that vividly portrayed the destructive effect of war on food security, finances, and the safety of women and children were discussed. Today we presume that all human beings should have not only access to food and security but also have the right to a voice in the management and distribution of goods, to benefit from their consumption and to participate in the governance of the place to which they belong.. A feminist perspective pays attention to the collective, communal aspects of organization, and how production, reproduction, distribution, and consumption interact in the micro and macro levels through economies of care. Although these activities happen usually outside a market economy (because there is no money figure attached to this work), they are carried out in the space of house and local community – with activities involving bartering, the struggle for clean water, distribution of food for poor people, access to medicine and medical care, problems of old age and of the physically challenged.

Challenges. This workshop's objectives also identify the challenges going forward:

- Bring to the fore, using feminist analysis, critical connections between security, gender relations and the economy
- Identify possibilities for collaborative interventions between and among women's movements and churches, and work toward developing an economics of care that specifically builds socio-economic security
- Contribute toward multilateral cooperation that can produce practical alternatives to the often violent measures being implemented in the name of security and development.

2 ***Our Economy Is a Violent One.*** This workshop convened to discuss the violence inherent in the dominant economic system and to explore possibilities of moving toward "God's economies," which are life-giving and sustaining. Our modern economic system has, since its industrialist inception, been in a constant state of conflict against that which gives life and against the health of creation. The violence of this economy is especially clear when viewed from the perspective of those who are not powerful. Creating a peaceful world requires understanding and implementing a peaceful economy and respecting God's house (oikos).

Challenges and recommendations include:

- The church community is called to speak on behalf of the oppressed, both in words and deeds, and to denounce prophetically and practically the violence embodied within our dominant economy
- Churches need to become communities where alternative economies are practiced and experiments made, and where people can address the idolatry of economic growth in their lives and in the dominant culture today
- Churches can model community living by sharing resources for the benefit and growth of members of their own community and of their neighbors
- Lessons should be learned from countries with stronger economies and sustained growth. Attempts should be made to discuss the worldview and theology that distinguishes life-giving economies from those that are oppressive.

3 ***Military Spending vs. Millennium Development Goals Spending***. The workshop presented an opportunity to brainstorm best practices for coordinated international advocacy campaigns to curb military spending – especially spending for nuclear weapons – in light of the financial commitments states made in signing the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2000. The workshop stressed the need to assess the ethical implications of unchecked global military expenditure from our different national contexts. It especially highlighted the experience of India and the region of the Indo-Burma border as a case study to guide the discussion.

Context. The Global Day of Action on Military Spending (12 April 2011) was a global event to advocate the transfer of funds from military spending to human needs. Given the current global economic crisis, even governments are beginning to talk about cutting military expenditure; however, they won't easily make these cuts unless they are forced to do

so. On the Global Day of Action on Military Spending, the International Peace Bureau and Pax Christi International together with the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington held an event to publicize the release of the annual report on world military expenditures by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. On this day, people all over the world joined together to focus public, political, and media attention on the costs of military spending and the need for new priorities.

Recommendations:

- Rethinking development assistance in the light of MDGs
- Discussing the role of emerging economies vs. those of historic "donor" states
- Sharing experiences and government spending priorities in different countries
- Advancing the role of young people in promoting advocacy objectives on these issues
- Revitalizing the conversation in our churches and organizations
- Utilizing new kinds of media coverage and more pictorial charts and statistics to "shock the conscience" of people
- Promoting future campaign coordination and networking to discuss best practices and lessons learned for the next Global Day of Action on Military Spending.

4 ***Healthcare for All in the Marketplace***. The workshop highlighted struggles and successes in providing healthcare to poor communities in a highly commercialized environment in the southern U.S.A. The Congregational Health Network is a Methodist ministry in Memphis, Tennessee. The network consists of 359 congregations, seven hospitals, other healthcare institutions, faith-based safety-net and social service and civic organizations, government agencies and schools. Member organizations strive to eliminate health disparities by stressing wellness and disease prevention. Obesity, diabetes, infant mortality and high blood pressure are major concerns for preventive healthcare. Network "navigators" and more than 500 unpaid volunteer health ministers in congregations assist pastors and congregation members during hospital stays. When patients are discharged from the hospital, network volunteers help them find community-based care.

This ecumenical, faith-based network has been part of building a health system outside of a hospital that provides care to the underserved. The network has mobilize religious groups to make a unique contribution to the health of their community starting at the congregational level.

Challenge. Replicating the model in other communities is complex. Establishing a faith-based network requires trust-building, nurturing and resource-sharing. It also calls for integratingmuch of the community's health resources, with the goals of including everyone and providing genuine care for all.

Peace among the Peoples

1 ***No Peace without Justice: Human Rights vs. Impunity and the Absence of Law.*** This workshop focused specifically on the churches' concern for human rights violations, the absence of the rule of law, and impunity in war-torn countries and other conflict areas. It emphasized the need to call for justice in cases of gross violations of human rights, as a deterrent to further injustice against people in general and in particular against marginalized people (such as indigenous people, women and children) in conflict areas. The workshop also brought out the importance of ecumenical and interfaith advocacy and lobbying at national, regional and international levels, as in the Philippines, and the challenge of monitoring and pursuing the implementation of other international instruments that protect human rights.

Challenges include:

- Recognizing poverty as a root cause of violence and impunity in the Democratic Republic of Congo, requiring immediate and serious attention
- Addressing the issue of "No Peace without Justice" through a pro-active engagement at local, national and international levels as well as through ecumenical networking and interreligious initiatives
- Strengthening and empowering churches to engage in critical dialogue, from victims' perspectives, with their respective governments
- Encouraging and empowering victims or their relatives to stand up for their rights and for the legal prosecution of the perpetrators of injustice.

2 ***Christian Mission and the Struggle for a World without Empire***. Does understanding God's mission include taking sides in the struggle toward a world free from subjugation and exploitation by imperialistic forces? This workshop gave an emphatic yes to the question: History is witness

to the fact that imperialistic forces exploit and subjugate weaker countries to protect their own economic and business interests. The same situation prevails today, as covert and overt forms of imperialistic neo-colonial ventures seek advantage through financial institutions, trade treaties, business agreements, and strategic geopolitical planning. Even nuclear policies and other international agreements on the possession of weapons of mass destruction are formulated in economically favourable ways. While imperial military intervention in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is visible to everybody, more covert intervention in other countries that seem to be peaceful democracies, such as Colombia and the Philippines, result in structural violence and in unquestioned imperial authority over governments and people. Another complex case is Israel/Palestine. A strong indication of the pervasiveness of "empire" is the maintenance of 820 US military bases in 137 countries. In how many of these countries are people are subjected to violation of human rights, including even extra-judicial killings?

Challenges. Some of the specific questions that emerge from this workshop include:

- What does this situation mean for Christian mission?
- How do churches build alliances
  —to be in solidarity with people who are in struggle?
  —to develop nonviolent forms of resistance?
  —to counter the imperialistic behaviours of the U.S.A. and Europe?
- How can the churches be actively engaged in supporting the peace process in Palestine/Israel, Colombia, and the Philippines?

Theological Reflection. God's mission includes addressing issues of human rights and Just Peace in the context of empire, through prayerful struggle. Since the time of the Exodus from Egypt, God's people were directed to resist empires and to build a just society free from domination. Looking forward, participants highlighted the need to:

- Draw attention to countries and people suffering at the hands of imperialistic forces
- Encourage formations like "Kairos Palestine," a form of nonviolent resistance against the occupation of Palestine, which is supported by the West and by not implementing UN resolutions
- Call on member churches to support the boycott of products from the occupied territories in Palestine (seethe Kairos Palestine document)
- Encourage a WCC delegation to the Israeli and U.S. governments to ask for enforcement of UN resolutions against the occupation of Palestine
- To urge member churches of the WCC, especially in countries that tend to be imperialistic, to clearly take a bold stand against these forces.

3 ***Conscientious Objection to Military Service and Asylum.*** This workshop reviewed and explored the WCC Central Committee Minute on conscientious objection. It focused on both national and international experiences. It highlighted the role of religious groups and communities in promoting and protecting conscientious objection for those in their own country, as well as asylum for those fleeing persecution and seeking refuge in other countries. The issue was discussed in the context of specific situations in Eritrea, South Korea and elsewhere. Conscientious objection to military service is both a human right recognized by the United Nations and a contribution to peace, challenging the role of the military. There is an ongoing need to work for universal implementation of the right of conscientious objection and to ensure asylum or shelter for those who have to leave their country because they are unable to gain recognition of that right.

Recommendations. The workshop participants encouraged:

- The WCC to call on churches to implement the Central Committee Minute on conscientious objection to military service
- Work for the universal implementation of conscientious objection and asylum as a human rights issue mentioned in UN Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1998/77
- Support for conscientious objectors suffering for their convictions in their home country as well as in exile
- Raising the issue of the lack of provision for conscientious objection in the WCC Assembly in South Korea in 2013.

4 ***Just Peace and Global Advocacy***. "Imagine that your church has arranged an appointment with your foreign minister when you return from the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation. Her office would like to hear how churches are working together to build peace that is more just. What will you tell the minister?" The workshop task was to prepare for such a meeting. It explored how directions for ecumenical advocacy could be set up using the Just Peace approach, taking up theological, economic and socio-political aspects of peace as found in the *Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*. Participants worked to answer one basic question: "What

are three or four key global public goods on which churches committed to 'Just Peace' and convinced of the necessity of a stronger global voice must advocate together?" First, participants selected key public goods under the ecological, economic and political themes of peace. The selections included:

- Peace with the Earth
  —Curbing climate change
- Peace in the Marketplace
  —Achieving the Millennium Development Goals
  —Living according to the "ethics of enough"
- Peace among Peoples
  —Reducing threats and fear by reducing military spending
  —Eliminating nuclear weapons.

Recommendations. Results like these could be refined for use in developing a forward-looking and shared agenda for advocacy related to Just Peace. Similar workshops with a longer time frame and expert resource persons offer potential for turning ideas into concrete strategic directions for work by churches and ecumenical networks. Further, the workshop's methodology can be used and adapted in order to reach "linked" advocacy goals. Goals can be tested against a set of criteria related to human impact and how "global" an issue is -- including scope, duration, cost and relevance to Christian faith.

5 ***For the People, by the People – A Jamaican Example***. The workshop addressed the question of how local congregations becoming healing communities for health and peace building. The experience of the Bethel Baptist Church was shared as a model of a "whole-person congregation-based healing ministry," operating in a participatory and sustainable manner, to minister to the underserved areas of Kingston, Jamaica, over the last 37 years. The workshop provided insights into how a community and spiritually based comprehensive health care initiative can be motivated and sustained with resources available in the host community. Bethel Baptist Church tried to overcome the compartmentalization of (a) mind and body (b) spirit and matter, and (c) individual and community related to Western dualism: the main challenge was to deal with the fragmented lives of many Jamaicans. Most conspicuously, the marginalized poor suffer from family incompleteness and familial abuse, disenfranchisement from education, political gangs, traumatic injuries, murder and HIV. The compartmentalized healthcare system did not provide patients with universal access, quality service or an integrated and personalized approach to care. The most valuable aspects of the Bethel program include:

- *Voluntary service as the anchor of sustainability.* The ministry has been sustained by the commitment of over 200 volunteers in the communities and the congregation. Most of these are non-professionals.
- *Participation of rival communities.* Communities that had suffered eight murders began to take part in conflict resolution exercises, advocacy, education, socioeconomic capacity building, environmental and holistic healing, plus self-help activities. Among the results are peace, freedom of movement and increased Christian commitment within the communities.
- *Making the church more inclusive.* The church's radical commitment to the marginalized has made its membership more inclusive. The homeless, the inner-city poor, and the mentally ill all participate in parish life.
- *A holistic vision.* The vision is owned and practiced by all organizations within the church, regardless of age, gender or other commitments to other ministries.
- *Support groups for people with special needs.* Congregation and community members take part in support groups for people living with bereavement trauma, diabetes, mental illness, HIV/AIDS and troubled marriages. This is an effective way for the church to become a true community for healing. All members of the church are able to support each other through birth-month groups.
- *Commitment to ownership and self-help.* The Bethel healing ministry has weaned itself from overseas assistance and is now self-sufficient thanks to a low-cost pharmacy, cost recovery (from medical and counseling clients, where affordable) and the establishment of a foundation.
- *Spiritual empowerment.* Through healing services, a hotline, support groups and ministries of visitation and intercession, a kind of spiritual empowerment undergirds the healing and sustainability work. Several persons have experienced God's healing and transformation.
- *Building the nation.* Through networking and mutual referrals, the ministry has been supportive to the country's public and private health system.

Recommendations. The Bethel model of holistic healing ministries

is worth emulating by all communities globally, especially as medicines and medical care become more costly and less accessible.

6 ***A Different World Is Possible***. The workshop centered around a visit to Holy Networks, a Jamaican initiative which promotes healthy lifestyles for youth. The network reaches out to young people who are illiterate, have no skills or jobs and are more often than not on the wrong side of the law. The program has worked successfully with teenagers convicted in juvenile courts and attracts a range of young people who have heard about it from friends, the police or other authorities.

The program empowers the young people by giving them basic education, computer skills, visual communication skills and opportunities to develop other talents such as music. Youth are encouraged to become responsible members of their family and community, to develop social skills and life skills that give them a measure of confidence and to lead a normal life. Annual summer camps at beautiful locations with friends teach them responsible community living, respect for nature and ecological balance, better interpersonal relationships between girlfriends and boyfriends and values of co-operation, concern and caring. Enhancing their self -worth helps youth to believe that a better world is possible.

Challenges:

- Many of the young people have deep psychological scars
- Believing that families provide better care rather than foster care, Holy Networks programs include parents as well as young people
- The absence of fathers and other male role model.
- The perceived irrelevance of the church and the perceived hypocrisy of churchgoers.

Participants drew parallels with the situation of marginalized youth in other places. Violence in parts of India is fueled by frustration and disillusionment among youth who grow up amid abject poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and the corruption and apathy of government officials charged with implementing government welfare programs. Outreach programs such as this one in Jamaica could help bring such young people back into their communities. In Colombia, teenagers and young men from impoverished communities are recruited for guerrilla groups, paramilitary forces and the army. Some churches are reaching out to these youth to help heal traumatic memories and help them make a new start in their communities.

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